

The Colorado Quarterly

THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

JOURNALISM IN COLORADO

Toward a Greater Smalltown Press

HOUSTOUN WARING

Mountain, Desert, and Plain

HAL BORLAND

A Voice for the Empire

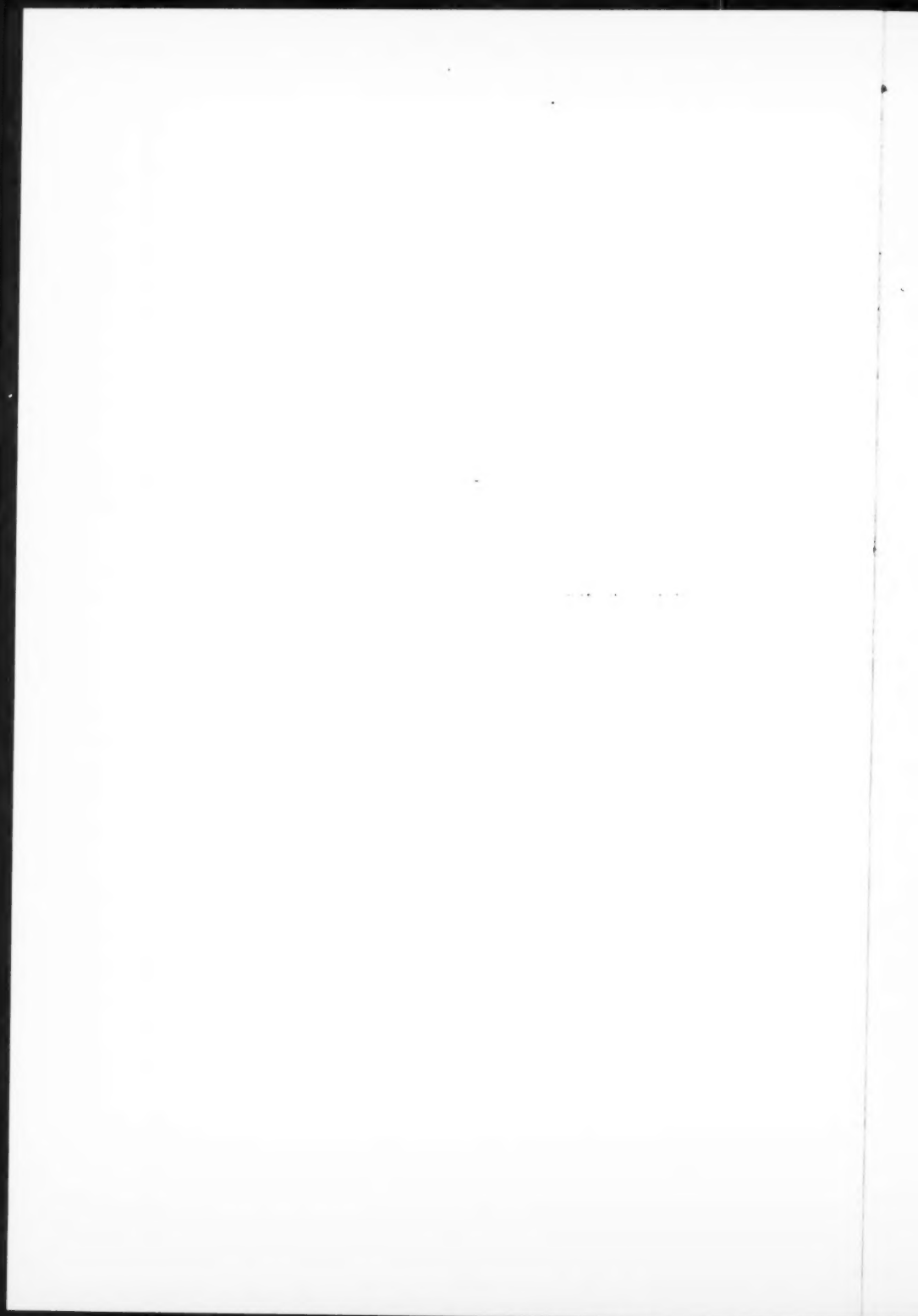
LAWRENCE G. WEISS

Editorials by Dave Day and L. C. Paddock

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(Continued on page 336)

A voice for the Empire

LAWRENCE G. WEISS

During his first week as publisher of the *Denver Post* in February, 1946, Palmer Hoyt walked over to one of his editors and asked abruptly, "Which Denver radio station calls itself 'The Voice of the Rocky Mountain Empire?'"

"None," said the editor. "I've never heard it before."

"Then put it on the front page," Hoyt ordered. "Put it on the nameplate on the front page of the *Denver Post* tomorrow."

In the rush of rebuilding a run-down newspaper, Hoyt was making decisions fast. If he thought long and carefully about the implications of his new slogan, he probably did it after the slogan appeared on the nameplate, rather than before. The important thing is that "The Voice of the Rocky Mountain Empire" has remained on the *Post's* front page for ten years. Whatever its origin, it now represents for Hoyt and the *Post* a basic commitment on newspaper policy. And Hoyt and the *Post* take that commitment very seriously.

Precisely what it means to be the voice of an empire, the *Post* has never set forth in detail. The definition must arise from ten years of performance, with a view towards what the *Post* has attempted as well as what it has achieved. On that basis, to be the voice of an empire means to supply the empire with news, to defend its interests, to promote its improvement, to report its activities, and to interpret the empire to the outside world and to itself.

This is an awesome responsibility under any circumstances. It is especially so in the case of the *Post*. For the *Post's* empire takes in thirteen states with 1.4 million square miles of territory, twenty million people, and terrain as varied as the oil fields of Oklahoma, the Arizona desert, and the snowbound mountain passes of Idaho. It's an empire of Dakota wheat, Utah uranium, Kansas corn, and Montana copper. To speak for this empire is to speak for one third of the land area of the United States.

If such an empire can have a voice, the *Denver Post* is, in fact, the newspaper best suited to provide it. The *Post* (circulation

256,000) is the largest newspaper from Kansas City to the Pacific coast. It is situated at the geographical center of the region, with no other large city within five hundred miles of Denver in any direction. The *Post's* editorial page is oriented to problems of Western development. The *Post's* news coverage, more than any other, is directed at Western news.

In its concern with empire, the *Post* has no competitors. The *Rocky Mountain News* of Denver—the West's second largest newspaper—has no imperialistic pretensions. It is a bright, lively tabloid, with emphasis on entertainment. It does well what it sets out to do, but it doesn't set out to build any journalistic monuments.

When the Scripps-Howard chain acquired the *News* in 1926, Roy Howard announced, "We come here simply as news merchants. We are here to sell advertising. . . But first we must produce a newspaper with news appeal that will result in a circulation that will make that advertising effective."

The *News* has fulfilled Howard's promise, but the promise itself was limited in scope.

The *Post* has set its sights a good deal higher. It, too, like the *News*, is in business to sell advertising, and Hoyt was hired partly because he knows how to make a newspaper property pay. But Hoyt has a sense of mission that goes beyond newspaper profits. Hoyt wants to give the Rocky Mountain Empire what it lacks now and has never had before: a newspaper that is truly great.

"The old man," a *Post* editor said not long ago, "is really serious about this newspaper. He wants it to be great. He wants it to be the greatest newspaper in the United States. He knows we haven't got there yet. He gets mixed up sometimes and goes off in the wrong direction. He does things he's sorry for. But he never loses sight of the goal. And someday I think he's going to get there." Many who have discussed the problem with Hoyt himself have come to the same conclusion.

One day last fall, a reporter and Hoyt—a stocky man of fifty-eight with rimless glasses, thin graying hair and a creased, loose-skinned, weather-beaten face—walked out of the *Post* building in downtown Denver and started down Fifteenth Street on their way to lunch at the Denver Club.

A newsboy near the building waved Hoyt a greeting. A shab-

bily-dressed colored woman said "Hello, Mr. Hoyt," as the publisher headed into the sharp, fall wind. Every fifty feet on Fifteenth Street and again on Welton, men in homburgs and cowboy hats, women in house dresses and in furs, paused to pay their respects to the editor of the *Post*.

Hoyt had been busy that morning wielding a silver trowel at a cornerstone laying. But his thoughts had already shifted to a speech he was preparing for William Jewell College in Liberty, Missouri, where he was to receive an honorary degree.

At the Denver Club, Hoyt sat at a table by the window, looking south and west over the city to the suburbs spreading out towards Colorado Springs and the mountains, to the mesas and plains reaching out to the Rocky Mountain Empire.

"When I came to this town," Hoyt said, "I didn't know a soul and nobody knew me. I liked Portland; I didn't know Denver. I was happy being publisher of the *Portland Oregonian*. I made what I thought were impossible conditions to the owners of the *Post*, hoping they wouldn't hire me. But they called my bluff. They gave me a free hand, and I had to start putting out a newspaper.

"We've made some progress since then, and so has the Rocky Mountain Empire. But both of us still have a long way to go. The *Post* and the Empire are going to go on growing together. I'm convinced that there's greatness in store for both."

In February of this year, the *Post* will have completed ten years as "The Voice of the Rocky Mountain Empire" and the handiwork of a publisher who wants it to be great. It is time to take stock of its successes and failures, to see how far it has come and how far it still has to go. It is time to ask what kind of a voice the Rocky Mountain Empire has and what that voice is saying to the *Post's* readers.

I

A ten-year balance sheet of good and bad at the *Post* must be strongly weighted in Hoyt's favor. When he took over, the *Post* was underequipped, understaffed, out-of-date, and undistinguished in news coverage, makeup, typography, and fairness. Despite a few brilliant staff members, it was a thoroughly undistinguished

newspaper. Today it is one of the nation's better afternoon dailies, one that no city need be ashamed of. It has not attained the stature of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* or the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, but it can stand up well in most other competition. It is far more responsible, reliable and public-spirited than any of the afternoon newspapers of New York City.

Before Hoyt made it the voice of an empire, the *Post* had played a number of equally pretentious roles against the backdrop of a tawdry and tempestuous West. During four decades under Harry H. Tammen and Frederick G. Bonfils, it had been "Your Big Brother," "The Paper with a Heart and Soul," and "The Best Newspaper in the U. S. A." For a long time it was known in Denver as "The Bucket of Blood on Champa Street."

The historian Frank L. Mott has called the old *Post* "the yellowest of the yellow journals." Its huge red headlines trumpeted the sensationalism of the day, crusaded for worthy and unworthy causes, maligned public officials, preachers and businessmen who refused to advertise. Its publishers were shot at, accused of black-mail, and hauled into court on libel charges. One of them was condemned by the Committee on Ethics of the American Society of Newspaper Editors.

The old *Post* dropped pennies into the street and sounded off on sirens to draw attention to itself. It sponsored circuses, train rides, and beauty contests. In its news columns, it solved crimes, tried suspects, found men innocent or guilty without bothering to wait for the police and the jury. Color was the dominant motif. "We're yellow," Tammen said, "but we're read, and we're true blue."

A kind of twilight lassitude had settled over the newspaper by the time Hoyt came to Denver in 1946. After the deaths of Tammen (1924) and Bonfils (1933), the *Post* had lost much of its exuberance and daring. The headlines still blared and the circus makeup on page one still looked like a purposeless patchwork. But the tone was more subdued, the spirit was tamer, the enterprise was missing. Like the West itself, the *Post* was settling down and losing its frontier vigor.

The paper's mediocrity helped to accentuate Hoyt's achievements. Within a year, there was word of a sweeping change, a "Hoyt revolution." Professor A. Gayle Waldrop of the University

of Colorado announced to a convention of journalism educators that a Chinook—a warm, dry western wind of considerable vigor—was blowing through the *Post* building on Champa street. “Traditions and routines that have fallen or been fastened on the *Post* during more than fifty years,” Waldrop reported, “have melted away as the Chinook that is Palmer Hoyt has changed its climate. . . . It is no small thing for a newspaper . . . to be revitalized typographically and editorially in ten months.”

Among countless major and minor fruits of the Hoyt revolution at the *Post*, three appear to be the most lasting and important.

A fair and vigorous editorial page, one of the *Post*'s strongest assets, was founded by Hoyt in 1946. In the beginning under Fred Colvig and during the last three years under Robert Lucas, the editorials have been strong, clear, and pointed. They meet issues head on. They take unequivocal stands. They reason rather than rant. They say plainly what the *Post* thinks about the affairs of Denver and the Rocky Mountain Empire, the affairs of Washington and the world.

Hoyt interferes very little with the *Post*'s editorial policy, although presumably he would if it departed too far from its liberal Republican line. He can count on Lucas to support internationalism, free trade, and a policy of strength towards the Russians; to fight McCarthyism and defend civil liberties; to urge federal aid for Western development; to oppose demagoguery in both parties and to end up backing the Eisenhower administration on a majority of issues.

Although the *Post* has been a spirited supporter of Eisenhower from the beginning, it is occasionally unwilling to follow the Eisenhower party line. This has led to some estrangement between Hoyt and his old golfing and fishing friend, Dwight Eisenhower; but Hoyt is determined to stick to his guns. When the *Post* thinks the President is wrong, the *Post* is going to say so. It has said so on offshore oil, on the Eisenhower loyalty program, on Dixon-Yates and, most of all, on the Administration's power and reclamation policies. In its clash with the administration on power and reclamation, the *Post* has called for the dismissal of Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay. Hoyt knows the *Post*'s criticism has angered the White House palace guard and all but

shut him off from the President's counsel, but it's a price he's prepared to pay for his newspaper's editorial integrity.

Outside of the editorial columns, the *Post's* editorial page offers a good balance of conflicting, and sometimes incompatible columnists. David Lawrence and Norman Thomas sometimes appear side by side. Doris Fleson and Marquis Childs sometimes dispute the *Post's* own editorial stands. People the *Post* has attacked are given the chance to hit back in guest editorials that get good display. On Saturdays, all the editorials are by the *Post's* readers. The page consistently offers a fair cross section of opinion. Through it, "The Voice of the Rocky Mountain Empire" can lend itself to any idea it thinks the West is entitled to hear.

A good separation of news and opinion is another Hoyt achievement at the *Post*. When the newspaper moved into a new \$6,000,000 plant in 1951, Hoyt took the occasion to re-emphasize the basic tenet of his journalistic credo:

It is the belief of the *Denver Post* that slanted journalism, the practice of mixing news and editorial opinions, is dishonest and should be relegated to the dead past.

We wish to say again that you will find our news in the news columns, our editorials in our editorial columns. And it is our pledge that we will never attempt by emphasis, omission or commission to mislead the public because of an editorial policy.

In general, Hoyt has kept the pledge. For fifty years before he came from Oregon, the *Post* had been running headlines like "TRAMWAY DESCENDS TO MEAN TRICKERY," "BEN THREATENS TO START SHANTY CITY HALL AT ONCE," (Ben being the mayor) "BEN'S SEX APPEAL LURES EIGHT WIMMIN INTO JAIL," and "DANDELION IS MOTHER'S DAY FLOWER, WEAR IT AND SQUELCH THE PROFITEERS." The news columns were similarly seasoned with the sharp views of the men who owned the newspaper.

Hoyt has put an end to that kind of journalism. There is no longer any conscious slanting of the news or the headlines. Sometimes the *Post* goes off on a crusade and gets a little careless (as it did last November in convicting John Graham for blowing up a United Airlines plane before he was brought to trial). Sometimes the newspaper is so wrought up applying the meat-axe to "a public enemy" that a little of the blade shows through the writing and

editing. Sometimes the ghosts of Tammen and Bonfils slip into the news conferences. News judgment cannot exist in a vacuum. No editor worth his salt can exile his opinions perpetually. The important thing is that the *Post* consistently tries to be fair to all sides. In most cases, it succeeds.

A strong capacity to resist pressure is the third major attribute Hoyt has given the *Post*. The one sure way to get Hoyt's dander up is to try to pressure him to change or omit a news story or an editorial policy. As some men collect hunting trophies, Hoyt collects lists of advertisers and pressure groups he has told to "go to Hell" when they tried to tamper with his newspaper. Both at the *Portland Oregonian* and at the *Post*, Hoyt built a reputation as a man who won't be pushed around. A businessman who threatens to remove his advertising unless Hoyt keeps out a news story is likely to find the story on page one.

On the other hand, Hoyt is not beyond the reach of reasonableness and mercy. Not long ago a businessman in Denver called Hoyt and asked him to keep a story out of the newspaper. By any standard of journalistic ethics or Christian compassion, the request was justified. The story could have ruined the man's business over a matter in which he was entirely guiltless. It would have served no useful public purpose. But Hoyt gave the businessman as savage a tongue lashing as he had ever heard. He told him no one, through force or pleading or any other means, was going to get the *Post* to suppress the news. Then Hoyt ordered the story left out. He had upheld his principle, and he could afford to be compassionate. In most cases he prefers to err on the side of principle.

There have been other fruits of the Hoyt revolution at the *Post*, but the three discussed above have been the most important in lifting the *Post* out of the large class of run-of-the-mill papers in the nation. A critic of Hoyt in Denver makes light of these accomplishments of the *Post's* publisher, arguing that Hoyt ought not to be given medals for doing what every publisher ought to do anyway. Hoyt has no afternoon competition, the critic says, and that makes it a lot easier to be strong and independent. The fact is, however, that although every publisher ought to behave as Hoyt does in these three respects, many publishers don't. And even in monopoly towns, few have had the courage to defy ad-

vertisers as Hoyt has. Even fewer have had the principle to defy their friends.

Apart from the three major accomplishments, Hoyt's other advances—in typography, in makeup, in news coverage—have made the *Post* immeasurably better than it was, but not perceptibly better than most afternoon dailies. It is in these latter fields, particularly in the field of news coverage, that the Hoyt revolution has yet to be fulfilled.

II

The greatest failure of the *Denver Post* is in the area of news coverage, news editing, and news display. Here the *Post* measures up to the standards of most other papers, but it falls short of the greatness Hoyt is striving for. The *Post* is average, where it ought to be superb. The news department turns out an interesting and readable newspaper, but it fails in its high obligation to keep the Rocky Mountain Empire adequately informed. The voice of the Empire is not telling the people of the Empire what they need to know. A good deal of what it is telling them is trivial and unimportant.

The *Post's* most important failure is in its daily play of the news. The set of values of a community or a region can be profoundly affected over the long pull by the kind of emphasis a paper gives the news each day. If the paper gives top billing to the quest for world peace and the problems of government, the reader gets a sense in time that these things are important. He may still turn first to the funnies or the sports page, but his newspaper each day is a reminder of his involvement in the destiny of his nation and his civilization. The paper keeps saying to him: "These are the things you should know about; these are important; this is the information you need in order to make decisions as a citizen in a free society."

The reader gets a far different message from a front page that is dominated by crime and scandal. He must conclude that a newspaper with such a page values information about a rape or a murder above information about everything else. And he learns to look for the rape and murder information, dismissing other kinds in the same way his newspaper does. In time, he and his

neighbors come to see life through the newspaper's distorted lens, and the moral and intellectual tone of the community declines.

During a large part of the Conference at the Summit last summer in Geneva, the *San Francisco Chronicle* gave the top spot on page one and much of its best space throughout the paper to stories about a local murder. The *Chronicle* was saying to its readers, in effect, that the first meeting of top leaders of Russia and the West in ten years—the first tangible hope for an easing of cold war tensions—was important enough for a subordinate position on the front page. But the Abbott murder case was more important. The *Chronicle* is not unique. All over the nation, newspapers offer the same kind of distorted values day after day. The maxim for some is an old one of James Gordon Bennett, founder of the *New York Herald*: "The function of a newspaper is not to inform, but to startle."

All too frequently, Hoyt's *Denver Post* is found in the company of papers that put sensationalism above substance. While its man Eisenhower was pressing the Russians for agreements to avert atomic annihilation, the *Post* lead headlines were "CAB DRIVER ADMITS MURDER" on July 19, "STATE TRAFFIC KILLS FOUR" on July 20. On those days, wittingly or unwittingly, the *Post* was directing readers in the Rocky Mountain Empire to the murder confession and the accidents first. It was saying on those days: This is what the *Post* thinks is most important. (Besides that, it was ignoring, as it often does, the distinction between "CAB DRIVER ADMITS MURDER" and "POLICE SAY CAB DRIVER ADMITS MURDER," a distinction that should be as important in journalism as it is in law.)

On September 23, 1955, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* used the following three headlines over the three lead stories on page one: "MOLOTOV CALLS ON WEST TO GIVE UP BASES, CUT ARMS WITHOUT TREATY," "VERDICT LIKELY TODAY IN TRIAL OF TWO AS KILLERS OF NEGRO BOY," and "BUNDESTAG OK'S WEST REICH TIES WITH MOSCOW." The *Denver Post* ran all three of the stories, but on page eight rather than page one. The *Post*'s top three headlines on page one were: "SYMPHONY PLAYER MURDERED, GIRL SHOT," "HASKELL QUILTS GOP POST, FILES PLEA OF INNOCENT," and "GIRL BARES NIGHT OF HORROR."

If the *Post* too often offers the Empire crime and sensationalism in place of solid news, it does not do so consistently. Its emphasis shifts from day to day. Hoyt argues that the choice of lead stories is meant to tell the reader not only what the *Post* thinks is important, but also what the *Post* thinks is interesting. He says his editors are constantly balancing interest against importance, "but the front page has got to be interesting, if we're going to sell any newspapers."

The problem of balancing interest and importance lies at the heart of the *Post's* difficulty with the news. It has substantial bearing on each of the following items, which must be listed on the debit side in any fair balance sheet of the *Post's* performance:

First, the *Post* underplays national and international news. Hoyt believes that people in the Empire need to know just as much about their government and its problems at home and abroad as people in Washington or New York. He specifically repudiates the pronouncement of Bonfils that "a dog fight on Champa street is more important than a war in Europe." Yet the event on Champa street is frequently easier to find in the *Post* than the story from abroad. National and international news is invariably subordinated to the news of Denver. And the effect is to encourage the Empire to be provincial rather than cosmopolitan.

In this connection, it is interesting to compare "The Voice of the Rocky Mountain Empire" with the unofficial voice of the Mississippi Valley, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. In twenty-eight daily issues from September 16 to October 15, 1955, the *Post-Dispatch* included sixty-eight national and international stories among its seventy-eight top stories, that is, among the three stories that got the biggest play each day. In the same period, the *Denver Post* included only twenty-nine national and international stories among the top seventy-eight. The figures, of course, don't prove in themselves that the *Post* was wrong and the *Post-Dispatch* was right. They do indicate, however, that the voice of the Mississippi Valley is emphasizing something quite different for the people of that region from "The Voice of the Rocky Mountain Empire." And the emphasis could spell the difference between an average newspaper and a great one.

Second, the *Post* doesn't print enough national and interna-

tional news. During the same twenty-eight day period there were ninety national and international stories on the front page of the *Post-Dispatch* that couldn't be found in the *Denver Post* anywhere at all. The *Post*'s front page had only forty-three national and international stories that couldn't be found anywhere in the *Post-Dispatch*. Again, the figures aren't conclusive in themselves. No newspaper can print all the news it receives each day, and the *Post*'s news judgment might have been better than the judgment of the paper in St. Louis. But it's hard to see why the *Post* didn't have stories to match *Post-Dispatch* headlines like "U. S. RECOGNIZES NEW ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT OF GEN. LONARDI," "WILSON STAND DIMS HOPE FOR BUDGET BALANCE," and "RUSSIANS KEEP PROMISE TO FREE 9,628 GERMANS." There are things happening east of the Missouri River and west of the Cascade Mountains that *Post* readers in the Rocky Mountain Empire don't find out about at all.

Third, the *Post* short-changes Empire readers by cutting important stories too short. It does this partly because its rising advertising lineage is reducing the amount of space available for news. It has to trim stories in order to fit them in at all. But the *Post* also trims many stories by choice. It believes that brevity makes for sharper writing, that length drives away readers, that shorter stories are more attractive. Much of its trimming it can justify on the grounds that it is merely "trimming away fat."

In the case of front page stories, however, the *Post* frequently finds it necessary to trim away substance as well. It has a no-jump policy, which means that every story that begins on page one must end on page one. It cannot be continued on another page. Since so much of page one is taken up with headlines and pictures, the space for the stories themselves is severely limited. As a result, major national and international stories usually run between 500 and 750 words, sometimes less than 500. Some stories can be told adequately in that amount of space; many cannot. Story after story that runs 1,500 to 2,000 words in the *Post-Dispatch* is covered in 700 in the *Post*. Sometimes the *Post* backs up its page-one story with a secondary story inside, but not often enough.

Fourth, the *Post*'s makeup allows room for too few stories on page one. That means the reader has to hunt carefully through the back pages to find news that should be called to his attention

at once. On days when the *Post-Dispatch* runs fifteen front-page stories, the *Post* may have as few as five. And the *Post* has no news summary to alert readers to stories on inside pages. No reader can tell at a glance what the cream of the news is. He must thumb through each of the *Post's* fifty or sixty pages to find out. Many readers think it isn't worth the trouble.

This discussion of front-page makeup is not meant as a criticism of the *Post's* use of large headlines and big pictures. They're part of a tradition, and they make the front page lively and attractive. But besides the headlines and pictures, the *Post* could make room for some news on the front page, too.

Fifth, the *Post* is skimpy and superficial in its coverage of regional news. It does an adequate job of covering the major spot news and some broad regional problems like the West's shortage of water. It ran a brilliant series last summer on uranium mining and investment in western Colorado and Utah. Usually, however, the regional coverage is short on digging and interpretation. Too many regional issues are neglected or treated superficially. The *Post* rarely takes enough time to explain them.

The *Post* tried a series on Western communities last year, but the stories were shallow. They were full of booster material of the kind put out by chambers of commerce. They ignored real community problems. Trinidad, Colorado, for example, was portrayed as a picturesque community, full of sunshine, scenery, and wide-awake merchants. The stories did not mention that the Trinidad coal mines have shut down, that unemployment is high, that the town may be dying on its feet.

In the thirteen-state Empire, the *Post* has only four full-time correspondents, and three of them are in Colorado. Neither they nor the scores of part-time stringers can do the kind of interpretive reporting the Empire needs. Some men on the *Post* staff feel that Hoyt, in his preoccupation with Empire, has bitten off more than the paper can chew. These men say the Empire is too vast for any newspaper to cover properly. They think the *Post* would do better to concentrate on the communities around Denver and improve coverage there. But the *Post* is a long way from giving up on the Empire. Its editors know that Empire coverage has been inadequate. They're making plans to improve it.

Sixth, the *Post's* Sunday edition fails to do the kind of summa-

rizing and explaining readers need to keep up with and understand the news. The Sunday *Empire Magazine* is slick and attractive, but it's devoted to light feature material and pictures rather than serious news issues. The Roundup section makes some effort at interpretation, but it chases off in a different direction every week, with no clear idea where it is going. It includes no summary of the week's news. It goes to press early and ignores developments late in the week. No planning is evident in its choice of articles, and the subject matter is rarely related to current news. What the daily news columns have left unsaid or unclear, the Roundup makes little effort to catch up on. Most of the section is devoted to amusement and travel stories.

The trouble with the Roundup is that it has no full-time editor. Robert Lucas, the chief of the daily editorial page, gives it what time he has from other duties, but what he gives is obviously inadequate. The people of the Empire need a section that can catch them up on the news each week and make them aware of its meaning. Producing such a section is a full-time job, and the *Post* is beginning to realize it. The Roundup, along with some other items on the debit side of the balance sheet, is likely to undergo improvement before too long.

III

If the *Post* fails to measure up in the news area to the needs of the Empire and the standards of a great newspaper, the blame must rest squarely on the shoulders of Hoyt himself. Hoyt has a free hand from the owners of the *Post* to manage the paper as he pleases. His managing editor, Ed Dooley, is a topflight newsman, capable of producing as good a newspaper as Hoyt demands. The *Post* has no afternoon competition. It has the money to buy any kind of news coverage Hoyt wants.

The staff at the *Post* knows that Hoyt wants "a great newspaper," but it has no clear idea, in the news area, of the precise ingredients in Hoyt's concept of greatness. This may be because Hoyt is not entirely clear and specific about the concept in his own mind. At any rate, he has not succeeded in transmitting to the *Post* staff a precise and consistent idea of the kind of newspaper he wants the *Post* to be. "We know we're the voice of the

Empire," a *Post* reporter said not long ago, "but we don't know what kind of a voice. We change from one day to the next. Sometimes it seems that every one of our editors is working with a different kind of newspaper in mind."

When Hoyt came to Denver, he had neither the time nor the need to spell out his concept of a great newspaper in exhaustive detail. He had merely to point out a direction. The *Post* was inferior in many obvious ways, and the remedies were equally obvious. Hoyt set to work on the obvious changes at once. He lifted the *Post* from the class of mediocrity. He gave Denver an afternoon paper it could stop apologizing for. What he wanted was clear and simple, and he accomplished it with incredible speed.

But the way from here on will be far more difficult, not clear and simple at all. The shortcomings of the *Post* are no longer so obvious, and the remedies will be far more elusive than they ever were before. If the *Post* is to keep on improving, it is no longer enough for Hoyt to proclaim his devotion to the ideal of "a great newspaper." He has to decide now precisely what he means. He has to make it clear to every man and woman on his staff what kind of newspaper he wants. He cannot hope to repeat the dramatic progress of his early years in Denver, but he can start the *Post* moving again. Most of all, he can weed out the chronic inconsistency which has led the *Post* to flounder in recent years without a fixed and rigid sense of direction.

The word "inconsistency" tends to describe better than any other the *Post's* handling of the news. Tuesday's paper may resemble Monday's only in the nameplate and format. Monday's may have the Summit Conference all over page one, with coverage any newspaper could be proud of. Tuesday's may be dominated by the cab driver's murder confession, with the developments in Geneva down among the smaller headlines. News decisions are improvised on the floor of the *Post's* news room. They are not weighed in the light of an overall policy conviction on what the people of the Rocky Mountain Empire ought to be told.

Managing Editor Dooley says the *Post* makes on-the-spot news decisions each day without worrying about a policy. "As the news comes in," Dooley explains, "we weigh one story against another and put the best stories out in front. The news changes every

day and so does our judgment. We don't have time to worry about policy. We're not thinking about what the *Rocky Mountain News* or the *New York Times* is saying, or what our circulation department thinks will sell more papers, or what people ought to be told in Wyoming. We're just judging the news as it comes, and we try to do it as rapidly and as honestly as we can. If we got tangled up with policy questions, we'd miss our editions."

Like Abraham Lincoln, who "simply tried to do what seemed best each day," the *Post's* news policy is to have no policy. Its consistency is the kind ironically proclaimed by James Gordon Bennett: "I print my paper every day." Both Hoyt and Dooley fear that a policy would impair the *Post's* objectivity and impose a rigid and artificial restraint on news judgment. Hoyt wants to keep his news executives free to make their own decisions. "Some days," he says, "I'd like to go out into the news room and tell the boys they've done a good job. But I'm afraid to. If I do, the paper will look like that every day. And that's not what I want." Consistency, which Emerson called "the hobgoblin of little minds," doesn't have Hoyt worried at all. He believes it's more honest to be inconsistent.

The argument over having or not having a consistent news policy can't be resolved without considering the kinds of newspapers that are produced under each system. The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* judges the news each day with a firm understanding that it must emphasize the news that's most important for its readers to know. The result is that the Mississippi Valley has a clear and consistent voice, continually seeking, by its play of the news, to elevate the region's standards. The *Denver Post* judges the news each day with no firm understanding of what it should emphasize, with a fear, in fact, that it would be slanting the news, if it tried to tell its readers what was important and what wasn't. The result is that "The Voice of the Rocky Mountain Empire" wavers and contradicts itself. In its play of the news, it offers the Empire no sense of direction. It fails to summon the people of the West to broader interests and higher standards.

A newspaper without a news policy can amuse its readers and make money for its owners. But it cannot serve effectively as the voice of an empire. An empire needs leadership and it needs producing. It needs an antidote to its provincialism and a spur to self-

improvement. This is particularly true when the empire is isolated by mountains and plains from established centers of population, culture, and government. The isolated Rocky Mountain Empire must be made to look outward toward the world and inward toward its own potential.

IV

Two propositions tend to emerge from a study of the West and its major newspaper. The first is that the Rocky Mountain Empire needs a voice. The second is that the man most capable of providing it is Palmer Hoyt.

The West is no longer the private preserve of cowboys, Indians, and prospectors. It is no cultural and technological backwash cut off from the main stream of American life. It has been redeemed from the prairie dog, the ten-gallon hat, and Wild Bill Hickock. The West has become civilized.

Into Hoyt's Rocky Mountain Empire, a steady migration of new settlers is flowing every day by plane and train and car—not by covered wagon. Houses and sewer systems, factories and supermarkets, highways and hot dog stands are being built all over the region. The West has its music and its poetry, its symphony orchestras and its universities, its intellectuals and its hep-cats, like any other part of America. And the West is vigorous and growing, while some other regions have passed their prime and gone into decline.

The West is ready for a great newspaper. The Rocky Mountain Empire needs a voice to help its growing, to restrain its youthful excesses, to give it leadership and wise counsel, to keep it informed about its government. A shifting and unintegrated chronicle of news miscellany will not do the job, nor a seasoning of seriousness in a potpourri of sex, crime, and journalistic pabulum. The West needs a paper like the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* or the *Louisville Courier-Journal*—yet a paper peculiarly fashioned to its own character and needs.

The *Denver Post* can become that kind of a newspaper and that kind of a voice. Hoyt has taken it a long distance in the right direction. He has the capacity and the will to take it further. The time for the Hoyt revolution to move onward to the final stage has clearly arrived.

A few of Hoyt's critics have given up hope for the *Post's* publisher. They think he's become intoxicated by his national reputation and immobilized for further action. They complain that he spends too much time away making speeches, that he's neglecting the Empire, that he's letting his job at the *Post* slip away from him. They argue that the Hoyt revolution has run its course, that the only way the *Post* can go is backward.

But the men who are closest to Hoyt at the *Post* have no such pessimism. They insist that the Hoyt revolution has never stopped and never will until Hoyt turns out the best paper in the country. They say Hoyt is working and planning to improve the *Post* every day. He knows his commitment to the Empire has not been fulfilled, and he means to fulfill it.

One admirer of Hoyt calls attention to the catnaps the publisher has sometimes been seen to take at meetings and even on public platforms. The catnaps revive his strength and recharge his energy for the work ahead of him. The admirer suggests that Hoyt has been catnapping briefly of late at the *Post*. But he says the catnap will prove a prelude to a more vigorous drive to give the Rocky Mountain Empire the kind of voice it needs.

"DARKNESS, MY LIGHT"

By EDWARD WATKINS

O Oedipus! proud even in thy rage,
to leap at blindness, as lovers leap, and doom
thyself to anguish in a restless tomb,
what legendary cries from age to age
can add a feather to thy peacock plume,
who strut forever ravishing the womb
and trying on the crown within the cage?

Toward a greater smalltown press

HOUSTOUN WARING

My entire working life of twenty-nine years has been devoted to the smalltown press. I believe more in what it can do than what it has done. I think I know why it has, for the most part, failed and the steps that must be taken if it is to succeed. There is no simple answer, and so you must excuse me if I tackle the problem from several directions.

I regard journalism as a profession to be staffed by scholars with fortitude. In the smalltown field, one more quality is needed. The journalist must also be a businessman, and in some cases a printer as well.

Now it is hard to find men who know a great deal about the social sciences and other bookish subjects on the one hand and who can be successful in advertising, accounting, and employee relations on the other. Yet on nine thousand weeklies and several hundred dailies these qualifications are needed if the smalltown press is to fulfill its destiny. Such newspapers are seldom large enough to boast an editorial writer, a news editor, and a business manager. Usually one man assumes all three roles.

We all know what has happened. Since newspapering is a manufacturing enterprise, the boss is generally the man with knowledge of salesmanship, bookkeeping, and machinery. The pure scholar cannot last long because he fails to understand such mundane things as payrolls, taxes, and deadlines.

The smalltown editor must be nine persons in one. You might say he has to live nine lives. On a lower level, he is comparable to the President of the United States, who has five jobs. What then are the nine jobs of the smalltown editor? Let me list them, commenting as I go along.

Circulation Manager. Vital as this task is, the editor cannot devote too much time to it. On the *Littleton Independent* we have a circulation of 3,900 which is distributed roughly as follows: One-

half by eighty boys and girls who buy the paper at four cents and sell it for seven, either on the street or in their neighborhoods; one-third by mail in the traditional smalltown weekly manner; and one-sixth through fifteen drug stores and supermarkets.

By getting rid of nearly half of our circulation by independent newsboys, we have no records to keep, no routes to map out, and no refunds for papers unsold. As to the mail subscriptions, we have a subscription card that will last a dozen years or more. Once a month, a part-time woman mails a statement that needs no marking except the address, and this address is used by the postman after it is enclosed in a window envelope. A brightly-printed return envelope with a three cent stamp (not a business reply type) goes along with the first mailing. After six to eight weeks and two more statements, we take the subscriber off if he has not paid.

This system is simple and it is even less bothersome because so many of our people take advantage of the two-year and three-year offers. The rates are three dollars for one year; five dollars for two; and seven dollars for three.

Although we have not had a large independent daily founded in the United States in fourteen years, it is not so difficult to start a smalltown newspaper, and the alert country editor must always be prepared for competition. In my time, I have had eight weeklies start in competition, and at one time we had three papers going at once. A man can develop all sorts of insurance against this sort of thing. One of them is a circulation that is tied up for three years!

Admittedly, we are not in too strong a position in this regard, as we don't have even the normal one-year hold on most readers. They buy from week to week through newsboys or stores, but we have a mobile population typical of the suburbs in 1955. Our power company has approximately the same number of customers as we have circulation, and we can get some idea from it how changing our population is. The power company connects or disconnects about two hundred meters a month. You can't reach the mobile part of our population by mail, as it has moved on before we could set up an addressing system. But our eighty news boys and girls spot most of them in their neighborhood round.

One final point on circulation. A trend has developed, in our

state of Colorado at least, for market news to appear on Thursdays. This has led many weeklies to go to press Wednesday nights and be delivered by mail Thursday mornings. The disadvantage of this scheduling is that you lose efficiency in your shop. It is hard to get up a head of steam on a weekly until Monday morning, and if you are going to mail on Wednesday night you have only three effective working days. It is possible to fill out the remaining two or three days of the week with job printing, but the front office is likely to rest on its oars until Monday morning.

We hit the street with our paper at 1:00 p.m. Thursday, distributing the first copies to the stores in time to be ready for the avalanche of newsboys. Eighty boys and girls with their bicycles all over the sidewalk make quite a stir in our part of Main Street. We occasionally lose the glass counter or the screen out of the front door, but this crowd of children must impress the merchants with our circulation.

Advertising Manager. The smalltown editor is usually advertising manager, therefore he must know advertising. He knows that in an eight-year period daily newspaper revenue has gone up 79½ percent but that the expenses have risen 95½ percent. He figures the same thing must be true in the weekly field, and he naturally is looking for more revenue.

About thirty percent of this nation, or fifty million people, now live in the suburbs. They are served by their suburban weeklies, but they all read the metropolitan dailies. Moreover, they give some attention to the broadcasting stations in the big city. In Denver, we have four television stations and a dozen radio stations. All of these media are after the advertising dollar—another reason why suburban publishing is an entirely different operation from publishing in the isolated small town.

One of my suburban neighbors has lost all but one of his full-page grocery ads to the big city papers, and we have seen some of our Main Street merchants lump their advertising budgets on specific products and run their advertising cooperatively with other dealers in the metropolitan papers. Radio stations, pressed by TV, are soliciting our merchants and even bringing their mobile units to Main Street.

All this is fair competition, and I have no quarrel with it although some of my editor friends regard this encroachment as they would an assault on Bedloe's Island.

A greater problem in connection with advertising is that the smalltown merchant knows even less about it than the smalltown editor. Many years ago I tried to remedy this to a degree by holding a Business Institute annually. I got top men to come to our town to lecture to the merchants on advertising, window trimming, salesmanship, and kindred subjects. This may have helped some, but I think the aid offered to merchants through national manufacturers has done most to improve copy and to stimulate use of space. Merchants, if they are wide awake, can get good mats from their wholesalers. Many times, the manufacturer will pay for half the space.

Another form of advertising revenue, and an important one, is legal advertising. I had hoped that in my day this form of public notice would become as intelligible as it is profitable. But I see no prospect for change.

In Colorado, a lawyer or a public official may publish his alleged "notice" in any paper in the county. When such a legal notice is printed forty miles away from the people concerned and at the same time in a meaningless legal language, the effect of such advertising is lost. Our state senator is showing an interest in this problem, especially in regard to new tavern licenses. The law now permits tacking a notice on the building or printing it in a newspaper. Three such licenses have been slipped over on the public because no one saw the tacked-up notice. It is proposed that the law require a display ad one column wide and six inches deep in the legal paper nearest the site.

Many a zoning change has been made without the neighbors' knowledge simply because the legal notice, set in 6-point type, has never specified the location of the re-zoning. What reader is aware that he lives next door to a factory that will be situated on the W $\frac{1}{2}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 8, Township 5 South, Range 68 West of the 6th Principal Meridian?

As a newspaperman I am interested in communicating—even when I am handling legal notices. Many's the time I have searched other papers in the county and asked the courthouse or the abstract office to tell me what the legal notice was about. I have

then printed a straight news story explaining it. It is simpler to do the same thing with legal notices in one's own paper.

You may be interested in a few comments on classified advertising. We publish more classifieds than any other weekly in Colorado in a town our size, and I think there is a reason for it. We have not done this by solicitation although we do call a customer when an ad runs out if it has been in the paper for a month or more. I think the success of our ads is that they are news items.

They are news items because we are generous with the words we allow. A person may insert thirty-five words for thirty-five cents, and in this sort of ad he can tell a story. Moreover, he is encouraged to state the price, give his name and address, as well as a phone number. We make the ad easy to read and we make it easy to answer. Timid about inserting their names, many people ask us to omit them. But unless we get direct orders to the contrary, the name goes in. That makes the news item.

It takes a little time to write each person's ad for him, but it also takes time to write a personal news item. We get at least thirty-five cents for our trouble for the ad, and we also get something that builds circulation. Nine out of ten people who buy papers over our counter will turn to the want ads before glancing at the front page.

As you can imagine, want ads consume a lot of our time. They are a nuisance as Thursday morning approaches, and so we give a discount on ads placed before 9:20 a.m. Wednesdays. A reader can insert an ad for thirty-five cents if he comes in early. It costs him forty-five cents after 9:20 Wednesday. These prices are good only if he pays for the ad (which may have been phoned in) by 9:00 a.m. Friday. This saves billing expense. Early ads are fifty cents if billed and late ads are sixty cents.

I am interested in putting out a newspaper with news and editorials, and I try to eliminate all work necessary that has nothing directly to do with this goal. Classified ads, like other things, are important to the success of a newspaper operation, but we can cut corners here by eliminating seventy percent of the bookkeeping. People will pay in advance if they have an inducement.

Before leaving the subject of advertising, I should like to pose a question: Do you think newspapers should frankly state their rela-

tionship to advertisers, or should they continue to pretend that they treat advertiser and non-advertiser alike?

I contend that advertisers—I am now speaking of important display advertisers—do get certain news breaks in the paper. I think this is right because the free press could not exist without the advertiser. I have no qualms about giving the advertiser a front-page story when he moves into a new building, gives a refrigerator away, or breaks last year's sales record. I don't do the same thing for the non-advertiser, and he doesn't expect me to.

I am now talking about favorable news in which the public interest is not involved. If the big advertiser gets into court, has a strike, offers bad deals to his customer, we have treated him the same as the non-advertiser—at times taking up the dereliction in the editorial columns. We have had editorials of this nature several times this year.

My view is that inasmuch as advertisers are the key to *our* success, we should do all in our power to see that *they* are successful. That only the public interest comes ahead of the advertiser. That we should formulate a clause in our codes of ethics in this connection. Without a written code to go by, we have a fuzzy notion about our proper handling of delicate cases—and we have several each month.

Let's admit that we favor advertisers when we can find news about their constructive activity. We are doing this in practice anyhow. At the same time let us strengthen our resolve to put the public interest above the advertiser. Matters such as divorces, drunken driving, labor disputes, and special-privilege legislation too often make the spineless editor forget his greater purpose. Only a clear-cut statement of the occasions when he can show favoritism and when he cannot will end this confusion.

Manufacturer. The smalltown editor must have some knowledge of printing and the machinery in his plant. Printing is from twenty-five to thirty percent of our business, and it is up to me to see that it is properly priced, that the equipment is in operating order and of an efficient sort, and that the flow of work is smooth. Every smalltown editor is always worried. He either has too much printing to keep his customers satisfied or he doesn't have enough

to keep his men busy. If you can't keep your customers happy, you fear they will go somewhere else or invite another printer to come to town. If you can't keep your men busy, you can lose money fast. Chargeable time in most shops is now seven dollars an hour so it is obvious that you can't let men sit around.

Mechanical costs are so great that editors must each year decide how much to spend on machinery at high prices and how much this will save on men at high prices. We have guessed wrong on some machinery and we have figured it right on other equipment. There is no part of a newspaper more deserving of attention than the production division. Stripping it of its idealism, a newspaper is primarily a manufacturing plant.

Industrial Relations Officer. Most editors excel in this area. Their employees are made to feel part of the family, so to speak, and most workers take satisfaction in the part they play in an important community institution. Many newspapers have profit-sharing plans, employee dinners to discuss organizational problems, annual or semi-annual parties, and other things for building contentment. They don't have rigid rules that irk men and women in big shops. There are other intangibles that lead employees to stay with the small town and its newspaper which most of the time must pay lower salaries than the big city. Just a few days ago I met a man that had been offered two and a half times his present salary to enter the public relations field. The increase was almost a triple one, as he would have had an expense account besides. He happens to be a young journalism graduate who got the message from his professors, and so he has refused to join the ranks of "men without voices." He was educated for a life of social action, and money is not tempting him away. Be it said here, too, that he has a publisher who is similarly dedicated. In all cases where you find an editor who is not also the publisher you must give due credit to the owner who stands to lose his all by agreeing to a fighting editorial policy.

Buyer. To make a financial success of a smalltown newspaper the editor must bring three things together in proper proportions.

He must have customers enough. He must have enough help to turn out the work, but not too much. And thirdly, he must have materials on hand when they are needed. In other words, the editor must be a buyer of supplies. It is expensive to purchase merchandise in small lots, and a shop loses if it cannot dispose of its goods within a year's time. Money is lost also when a job is ready for the press but the proper ink or paper is not at hand. Scattered purchases run up freight bills. Over-the-counter merchandise must be marked and the stock not be allowed to run out. Towels, soap, fire extinguisher fluid, and fly spray must be secured—and all this must be done efficiently between phone calls and writing editorials. Some wholesale paper houses carry as many as seven thousand different weights, colors, and kinds of paper items. The country editor never learns them all, but the better he performs as a buyer the better his profits will be.

Real Estate Owner. A large number of smalltown editors own their buildings. When they do, they must wrestle with the dozen problems connected with property management, such as ventilation, fire insurance rates, heating equipment, water and sewer troubles, leaky roofs, painting, broken windows, assessed valuations, exterior signs, parking squabbles, floor coverings, and trends in real estate values and pedestrian traffic.

Accountant and Bill Collector. The country editor must also be a bookkeeper and bill collector. He must understand social security forms, income tax forms, unemployment insurance forms, and withholding tax regulations. He can delegate much of this work, but he should have the knowledge to direct it. By sloppy bookkeeping methods, thousands of newspapers lose huge sums each year—either because goods or services are never charged to the customer or because bills are not collected. Our own bad-debt losses are about one-third of one percent. In some newspapers the losses are ten to twenty times as much. As in everything the smalltown editor does, this is a matter of emphasis. Some editors collect bills; others devote that time to creating new business; others sneak that extra hour to write a feature story or a couple of

editorials. The end product—a good newspaper—is what counts, and the conscientious editor has to decide a hundred times a week where to direct his efforts.

Collector of News. We now come to the news department, which is something the editor is supposed to understand. Unfortunately, he does not. He often fails to get continuity in his stories so that they are kept alive from week to week until their news value is gone. He frequently is satisfied with press releases and hand-outs—pleading lack of time to present a rounded story. Because he was once told to get all the names in his paper that he can, he forgets to build action around these names. He seldom digs out an important story, rarely secures an interview, and not having the educational background, he seldom knows all the questions to ask when he goes after news. In writing his story, he usually forgets to use direct quotes. The smalltown editor knows little of the art of communicating, but he is not alone there. I predict that research which will be done in the next twenty years will revolutionize news presentation.

Not only must the editor learn about communicating, but he must understand his environment. The principal function of the newspaper is to help the reader understand his environment. It is clear that the newspaper cannot do this if the editor himself doesn't know the sociology of the small town.

The time has come for the smalltown editor to include photography in his news-gathering. Many editors already have good cameras, their own dark rooms, and Fairchild equipment or some other means of making cuts. Considering the time consumed in this undertaking, I think the quality of the pictures as they appear in the papers is too poor. I am depending on commercial photographers and engravers until I discover a quicker, cheaper, and better system. Meanwhile, I think we should all interest ourselves in photography—especially the schools of journalism.

Before leaving the field of news, I want to urge all young reporters and photographers to dress properly. This matter of dress is not too important in a small town where everyone knows the reporter, but it is important when one is seeking to interview a stranger. Many a door has been kept closed to a reporter in a

loud sport shirt. Even when the informally-dressed reporter reaches his subject, he is less likely to gain his confidence than the man who dresses with care. Not long ago a seasoned London reporter was asked how he gained access to so many distinguished people. He replied that he simply carried a cane and gloves. This is not a recipe that could be used in America, but the suggestion is good. Prestige is important in any activity. We are superficially judged by the clothes we wear and the cars we drive. Many newspapermen are non-conformists in their social theories, but I see no point in under-cutting one's program by being unconventional in dress. If a newsman looks like a solid citizen, his views are more likely to be accepted as solid—even though they are quite revolutionary.

Interpreter and Crusader. I have saved until last the task of editorial writing and civic leadership. No doubt this is what comes first to your mind when you think of the smalltown editor.

My theory about a weekly newspaper is that it should publish only news with a local angle (except in that rare instance where it can uncover a story that dailies have missed). On the other hand, I believe the weekly should open its editorial page to the world. Informed smalltown opinion should be expressed on everything from the United Nations to conditions at the state penitentiary.

The weekly's editorial-page features need not be any less valuable than the daily's. The same columnists and cartoonists are usually available to both. Yet I doubt if nine out of the nine thousand weeklies are spending the money for good editorial page material. For many years we have used Walter Lippmann, Thomas L. Stokes, and Herblock's cartoons. The cost of setting the type is more than the syndicate charges for the best commentator; so why economize by buying anything else? As you would expect, we have to buy material that is not used by the metropolitan dailies in our area.

I said earlier that the function of the newspaper is to explain the environment to the reader. Most editors believe that they must go one step further and act upon that environment so that

it is changed for the better. This requires editorials, civic leadership, and the building of a united community spirit.

The smalltown editor must strive to get other people to carry the ball in most crusades. Otherwise, he goes off at a tangent and devotes all his energies to one cause. In any community there are a score of things that need attention, and the editor must not neglect the other nineteen while he is battling for the project of which he let himself be elected chairman.

Few editors become fanatical about a single movement. The reason is that every day they are impressed by callers who point out how vital *their* cause is. Consequently, editors seldom suffer from the sin of oversimplification.

There are various ways by which the editor can keep abreast of the times. To begin with, he needs four years in a liberal arts college. I think he should major in journalism, but I would caution him about taking too many technical courses to the neglect of certain essential subjects.

Editors seldom study serious books thoroughly after leaving college, and so their background must be secured on the campus. They must, in their undergraduate days, learn something of biology, sociology, social anthropology, political science, history, economics, psychology, international relations, labor problems, philosophy, and literature. Otherwise, they will enter the profession underequipped, and the odds are a thousand to one that they will never find the time or have the perseverance to catch up on this lost background.

Assuming that the would-be smalltown editor has had such training—plus courses in advertising, accounting, and the like—we become quickly aware that he cannot stand upon this knowledge in a changing world. The learning process must be continuous, but for the average country editor it should also be easy and palatable. I have spent a good many years looking for the easy course, and I think you may be interested in these secrets of an unscholarly editor. You may wish to pass them along to country editors in your home states.

I left the University of Colorado campus in 1926 and didn't do much more about my education until 1931, five years later. I secured a substitute editor and returned to the same university for a five-and-a-half-week summer term. Not being a scholar, I did not

register for credit and thus dodged the reading assignments. I audited all the courses I could, taking voluminous notes that helped me in editorial writing for a couple of years.

The next winter I talked to the dean of the extension division at the University of Denver and arranged for a psychology course to be taught in Littleton for twenty-three weeks, one night a week. This helped my community as well as its editor. The Fireside Forums, as we termed the classes held in our home, became more generalized in later years, as we found interest lagged if the same subject matter was discussed for more than three weeks. Hence, we switched from foreign affairs to zoology and from philosophy to sociology. I sponsored these Fireside Forums for eleven winters, usually reporting the substance of the lectures to a larger audience through the newspaper. I like to report lectures for two reasons. First, they make good news, and secondly the physical act of typing the story structures the material in my mind. A passive listener does not retain a third as much as the active reporter.

In 1948, I gave an address on the topic of the Editorial Advisory Board which was a group of eight specialists, mostly in the social sciences. About twenty newspaper folk met with these well-informed critics every three months and spent four hours bringing themselves up-to-date on current problems. We did this for six years until I finally grew tired of organizing the quarterly dinners.

The successor to the Editorial Advisory Board has been the Critics' Dinner held annually in my hometown of Littleton. The *Littleton Independent* invites ten different citizens each year and asks for suggestions and criticism. This criticism is by intelligent people but they are not expert in any of the social sciences. So actually the dinners prove to be "good public relations" rather than educational. Nevertheless, they do help the editor gain a grass-roots viewpoint.

When I was a Nieman Fellow at Harvard University in 1944-45, I dreamed of a Little Nieman plan for this part of the country. It was my hope that some foundation would give sufficient funds to bring a dozen policy-making newspaper and radio men to a good university for a month or two, paying their salaries while they were away from their desks. By selecting a new set of editors each summer, we could cover a lot of ground.

Nothing has come of this idea, but last July a somewhat different plan was put into effect in Southern Illinois University by Dr. H. R. Long, head of the Department of Journalism. He secured some money for speakers from the university and launched the five-day National Conference of Weekly Newspaper Editors on July 18. Editor Malcolm Coe of Pearisburg, Virginia, Wayne Rowland of Long's faculty, and I pooled our long-held ideas about such a meeting, and the result was most encouraging. Ten weekly editors from the Canadian line to the Gulf and from coast to coast lived together for five days, went to seminars for nine hours a day, and spent the remaining hours between 7:30 a.m. and 11:30 p.m. swapping ideas or arguing over the topics brought up in the seminars. These topics included rural sociology, military strategy, foreign affairs, atomic fallout, community economic development, and so forth. We had two economists talk, but I am afraid they did not cause any radical change in the thinking of the editors. The new economics cannot be learned in a week. I spent two hundred hours with economists at Harvard during my Nieman year, and I remember that for the first two months I couldn't believe they knew what they were talking about. I was finally won over, but I can appreciate the skepticism of editors after brief exposure at a five-day school.

This is a dilemma for which I have no answer. An editor's whole editorial outlook is colored by his economics. Yet it is difficult to change the older generation of editors in a short course in school.

Southern Illinois University will repeat the five-day conference next July, probably increasing the number of editors to twenty-five. It is hoped to have the same editors each year but to change the topics as the times demand. Next year, a big-name journalist will spend one day with us to lead a discussion on some professional problem.

I am also learning that another kind of conference can be a great help to me and my fellow editors. I have thought for some time now that the weakest part of our democracy is state government, and as a smalltown editor I share the blame for this weakness. I don't know enough about it because I have been too busy with other things. It is my intention to take a small step in remedying this situation by creating an annual Editors' Statehouse Work-

shop in the Capitol in Denver. I propose to invite fifteen editors to spend the day with me, visiting eight little-understood offices and questioning the head man in each office about his duties. I hope to have the Governor join us for lunch so that he too can answer questions. In this way, perhaps we can learn a bit more about the public utilities commission, state department of education, or the work of the revenue director.

I have tried to draw for you a picture of a smalltown editor and the corners he has to cut in order to function at all effectively. His is a marginal operation despite the fact it is essential for a democracy to have a smalltown press. I don't know of any great democracies that have flowered on the local levels without a smalltown press, as inadequate as this type of journalism has thus far proved to be.

A few days ago I asked a journalism professor how we might draw more graduates into the weekly field. He replied that he urges his students to enter the small towns, learn all aspects of the business, and then they can get jobs in the big cities.

As far as I'm concerned, he missed the point. The small towns need men who will spend their lives in rural or suburban newspapering. You must be trained for this work the same as a minister or a teacher is trained for the pulpit or the classroom, and then you must establish yourself in a town and stay there. You are more effective your tenth year in a given town than you were in your first twelve months, and you do a better job in the twentieth than in the tenth. In fact, my observation is that it takes twenty years of plugging to accomplish many radical reforms.

I am one of the long-time supporters of journalism schools. They are staffed by men who give us the new blood for the profession, and the professors are the only well-informed, moderately-detached critics of the communications field. But I have one complaint. I don't believe that most of these same professors have given the emphasis they should to the smalltown field. Our graduates are not inspired—or trained—to devote their lives to the small town. A thousand men and women are needed yearly to replace the ranks; yet only a handful are prepared for the task. This is a pity for society and a pity for the eager young people I

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see in the journalism classrooms. For if they are people with a purpose they will want to speak their piece. The only way for ninety-eight percent of them to retain their voice is to edit a small-town newspaper.

TORCHBEARER
(Louis D. Brandeis)

By LAURA ELIZA BLIVEN

Without reserve, not granting it was there,
The knowing cursed the torch's steadfast gleam,
The jural verve that sparked the bearer's flair,
While hurling lies to quench his shining dream.
Their cynic falsehoods lived to mock their kind
And founder in the dusk this doer saw,
Till pygmies climbed to search his lucent mind
And by its light regain a living law.
His yearnings rode upon a cosmic tide.
His vision born among the pulsing stars,
He sought for humankind a freedom wide
As he perceived through self-restraining bars.
Beyond all time how must he even yet
Soft-smiling note how we shrug off our debt.

Mountain, desert, and plain

HAL BORLAND

During the thirteen years that I have been writing the outdoor essay-editorials each week for the Sunday edition of the *New York Times*, most of my subject matter has come from the area where I live, within a hundred miles of New York. But because I make frequent trips, and because I have complete freedom of topic for those editorials, I write perhaps a dozen pieces a year from other parts of the United States. It seems to me that among the best of those away-from-home pieces are those about the West. This probably is natural, since any trip to Colorado is a kind of home-coming; my formative years were spent there.

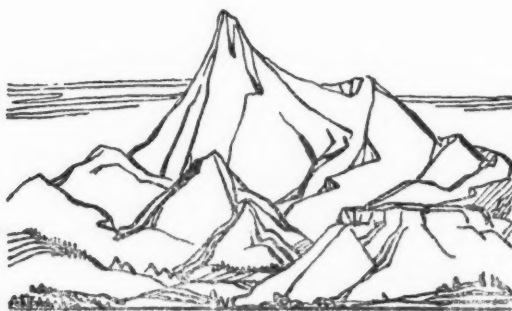
I have chosen five of those essays for use here. They are essentially pictorial. Two of them were written during the Summer, the other three during the Fall, the most beautiful time of the year. Here they are:

THE MOUNTAINS

There's something about a mountain that engraves itself upon a man's emotions. Any mountain does it, whether it is the old and weathered uplift of the Berkshires, the more rugged upthrust of the Alleghenies, the singular oak-clad Ozarks, or the majestic Rockies. And all mountains gain stature and emotional impact from their approach and surroundings. No mountain stands alone and isolated in time or place.

That is perhaps the reason the Rockies are such awesome mountains. One approaches them across a vast upland plain so that they rise out of the distance with an almost mystic, mirage-like unreality. Yet there they stand, once they have emerged from the blue haze of distance, the venerable barrier to travel which blocked and diverted the way west when the great tides of migration all turned their backs on the sunrise. And, for all the change and shifting of the tides, they remain, the Great Barrier.

One approaches them and senses the presence of great forces. Forces beyond man's easy comprehension. It is all well enough to think of such an upthrust as wrinkles on the earth's old forehead, but even as wrinkles they are stupendous. And in their presence man is inconsequential. There is a strange reality, for man the insignificant rises to a kind of magnificence of his own in the mountains' presence. It is essentially emotional and not often conscious, but who can stand in the presence of such a thing as a mountain and remain unchanged?



We rationalize our mountains, all of us. We love them because of their cool air, their pines and spruces, their white-water streams; we go to them to find change, isolation, or grandeur. And yet it is what happens to us, inside, it is the emotional and even the spiritual change, which draws us back to those mountains again and again. It was not altogether a matter of mysticism that prompted the ancients to the belief that their gods dwelt in the high places of this earth. Those gods, by whatever name we know them, still dwell there; and we would, from time to time, draw near unto them that we may know them, and ourselves, more intimately.

MOUNTAIN AUTUMN

Autumn in New England is traditionally a pageant of unmatched color, but late Autumn this year has given the Mountain West

its own magnificence. It has been a green and gold spectacle with flashes of red and a dusting of crystal, and it has extended from the foothills of Colorado down through New Mexico and Arizona and west into Utah.

You strike it first at the Front Range in Colorado, and as you go south down that range and through the interior valleys it seems to warm up, even in color. There are endless banks of evergreens, pine and spruce mostly, for the backdrop. Against this has been spread the gold of the quaking aspens, pure gold in color. The aspens dot the high benches and come spilling down the mountainsides like golden streams, to fan out in the lower valleys in a sunny flood. And in the lower valleys they mingle with the cottonwoods, which have been not quite so scintillant, a bit more susceptible to early tarnish, and with the willows, which shed their gold too quickly. On the rougher slopes are great carpets of scrub oak, tufted as a hooked rug when seen from a distance, full of warm browns and bronzed reds. These, as all oaks, are jealous of their leaves and will hold them for weeks to come.

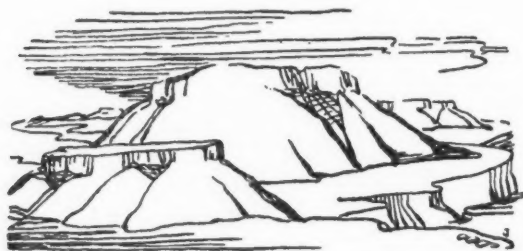


West, in Utah, and south, in New Mexico and Arizona, there is less scrub oak, more cottonwood and willow, and the season is even later; so the pattern is predominantly green and gold with the rocks of the stark mountains providing the deeper tones. And everywhere that the peaks tower 11,000 feet or more there has been snow, gleaming reminder that Winter is already there upon the heights; in some places it has only dusted the peaks, but elsewhere it has come well down into the pines. But in all the val-

leys this year the gold of aspen and cottonwood has persisted, Autumn reluctant to let go its last, lingering hold on the High Country.

HIGH PLAINS

The High Plains begin rising west of the Missouri river and flatten off into the great wheatlands of America, turning into ranch land just before they end abruptly at the Rocky Mountains. Early maps labeled them The Great American Desert, and to early travelers they were wasteland to be crossed painfully before they reached a promised land beyond. But some of the travelers wearied, found a cottonwood tree, a trickle of water, and decided to go no farther. Thus was settlement begun.



The Plains still are sparsely settled, in terms of the East, and to many travelers they remain a wasteland to be crossed to get somewhere else. But now and then a traveler stops on a ridge and looks out across the rolling land and gets some of that sense of space and distance which marked the plainsman of the past. A quiet half hour on such a hilltop will bring a wholly new conception of this America of ours.

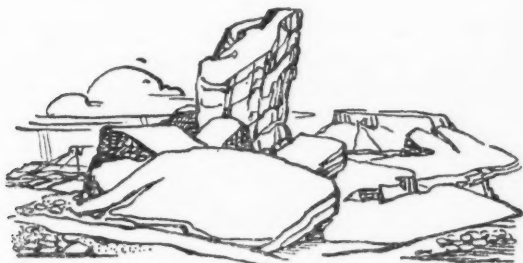
As far as the eye can see roll the hills in tremendous swells, hills of no particular height and valleys of astonishing breadth. The horizon is unbroken, no matter where you look. Close-packed

cities and tight little farms are beyond that horizon to the east. Beyond that same horizon to the west rise mountains three miles high; but they, too, are out of sight. Here are only the High Plains, hundreds of miles of them, millions of acres. A house is lost in the immensity. A man is of no seeming consequence.

Yet man has made these plains his own, in so far as man can tame any land. Here lie the wheat fields. Here graze the cattle and the sheep. Here grow bread and meat, tons and truckloads and trainloads of it. Here, beyond sight of mountain or city, lies an empire. Here, too, is America, with its cottonwoods in remote valleys and its far-apart trickling waters. Men and women stopped here, wearied of distance, and put down roots. And those roots, like the grass on the rolling hills, held the soil and made it their own.

GEOLOGIC GHOSTS

You drop down out of the green mountains and the desert country lies ahead, the last broad span before you can smell the fog and the salt air of the Pacific. You face stark mountains and erod-



ed hills and valleys where the shorelines of ancient seas are still visible. This is a desert of rocks and organ cactus and greasewood and ocotillo, where the shimmer of heat and distance lies in the hollows and the mountains rise like gigantic rubble heaps. No trees grow here except the occasional mesquite, and even the scant

brush is drought-stunted. In Summer it is an inferno of heat. In Winter it is numbing with night cold. Now, in late Autumn, it is mild, almost hospitable.

But Autumn does little to the desert beyond tempering its extremes. Cactus does not change color with the seasons. Mesquite sheds rusty leaves and reveals thin brown pods curled like corkscrews. Ocotillo lifts gaunt, spiny arms toward the vacant sky; where some vagary of wind or mist has given it a taste of moisture those arms are outlined in green, and where mist has lain heavily there are scarlet tassels of bloom. Desert plants come to flower less by season than by opportunity, and opportunity means moisture.

Desert colors are rock colors, and they vary with the light and the time of day. A mountain glows fiery red at sunrise, turns dull brown at midday, is purple at dusk. A desert valley holds the blue of distance, the glittery white of full sun, the gray of evening. It has no Autumn brilliance beyond the brilliance of its hard light, its deceptive distance, its eroded rocks. It lies there with geologic ghosts, forgotten by the sea which formed it.

THE COTTONWOOD

There is no doubt that the oak and the maple are the great and lasting glory of the American woodlands, particularly in Autumn. But as you travel across the land, east to west, across the midland prairies and the high plains to the western mountains, you come to new respect for the lesser breed of trees, the birches, the poplars, the willows, the aspens, the cottonwoods. Particularly the cottonwoods. Among them, these lesser ones shelter man, bird and beast in the most unlikely places and they add ease and comfort where the more resplendent oak and maple never venture.

The prairies of Illinois and Iowa still have their share of oak and maple; but along the lessening streams west from there the willow and the cottonwood begin to predominate. And as you move from the prairies onto the high plains you leave the eastern trees behind. Now you have, along the streams both great and small, cottonwood trees and willow brush. Brittle cottonwood,

which fueled emigrant fires and even provided makeshift wood for wagon repairs. The willow brush occasionally rises in a stunted tree, too small for lumber but green enough in Summer to keep alive and green the memories of "back home" among the pioneers.

Then you cross those miles where not even the cottonwood grows, where the willow brush hugs the dry stream beds and never lifts its head beyond the height of a man. And you come closer to the mountains, and there the cottonwoods march out to meet you.

There they are, along all the streams again, weed trees by any lumberman's gauge but trees in a land of low growth, shade and comfort and a sigh of wind among leafy branches. Fuel in a land of little fuel. Even a measure of beauty when Autumn comes. The cottonwood, one of the woodland's humblest, but the tree which welcomed the traveler who first made the wide, wide plains his home.

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Newspaperman's problem: to resist or not to resist

EARL E. ASBURY

Mr. Asbury's editorial from his *Bent County Democrat* of Las Animas, Colorado, was one of those which won him the 1955 Crosman Memorial Award for excellence in editorial writing, awarded by the College of Journalism of the University of Colorado.

Sometimes I marvel that newspapers, by and large, turn out to be as good as they are.

Because frankly, about 90% of the pressure put on a newspaperman is pressure to put out a mediocre paper. Only about 10% of the pressure we get is in the direction of putting out a good paper.

As a result, any time you find a good newspaper, you find behind it a newspaperman who has resisted a good share of the bad pressures. Don't kid yourself that any newspaperman is able to resist them all.

Here are some examples of the things we mean. And no one should take any of them personally, because each one literally happens about once a week.

1—A young man who's been fined for drunken driving demands that we keep his name out of the paper. Frequently he gives as his reason that his mother has a bad heart and if she saw him written up in the paper, it might kill her.

If someone is arrested for drunken driving (or any other traffic violation) in this county, we consider it news. It isn't good news, but it's news. Furthermore, we're cooperating with the state patrol, which has requested we print traffic violations.

2—It's 108° in the shade and Las Animas that week has been the hottest city in the nation. Somebody will stop us and say, "Don't put that in the paper. That won't do our town any good. People will think this is an awful place."

Some people tend to get the newspaper mixed up with the Chamber of Commerce. Actually, we're all for the Chamber of

Commerce and have tried to be active in it. But if Las Animas is the hottest town in the nation, that's news. If in that instance, printing of the news does not coincide with the objectives of the Chamber of Commerce, that's unfortunate.

"But," you might say, "I thought you were interested in community service."

We are, very much so. You might say community service is our number two goal. But our number one goal is printing news.

3—Then there's the club that gets a long news release from its national headquarters with a memo to retype it on their own letterhead and give it to the editor. Maybe the whole club will get mad if we don't use it. But these same club members might be the first to complain if we started filling our paper up with non-local news that really isn't of interest to anyone but members of one certain club.

4—There's the man about to open a new place of business, but he doesn't want anything in about it. Not yet anyway. "I'll give you a real good story when I'm ready," he usually adds.

"But Mister," we try to explain, "now's when it's news. By the time you're ready for your 'big story' everybody will know about it and it won't be worth a big story."

The most common rebuttal to that is, "Listen, I said don't run anything now. You run it now and you won't get any advertising from me!"

5—Time after time a story will break which might show one of our friends in a not-so-favorable light. We have the choice of leaving it out or running it and then being met with a very small hello—or maybe no hello at all.

Like we said, most of the pressure is in the direction of a mediocre paper. That's why newspapermen need weeks like National Newspaper Week (which happens to be this week) so they can take stock of themselves and decide whether it's worth-while fighting it all for another year, or whether the smart thing would be to give in.

As for us, we think we'll keep resisting for a while yet. Heck, that's half the fun of it!

Editorials

DAVE DAY AND L. C. PADDOCK

The following selections from Dave Day's *Solid Muldoon*, published in Ouray and Durango, Colorado, between 1879 and 1892, and from L. C. Paddock's *Boulder Daily Camera*, published by him between 1892 and 1940 in Boulder, Colorado, will offer our readers a chance to compare such editorial writing with that of today. We think that nowadays it may be difficult to match these editors for wit and courage and at times vituperation.

From THE SOLID MULDOON

The signal fire on the "log road mesa" Saturday night, was but the reflection of a mountain fire on Cap. McFadden's nose. (October 10, 1879)

* * *

Ed Suydam says the New York dining room girl's foot is not as small as those of the Kansas City hash slinger, but they contain more warmth. Ed is prospecting. Ed is. (January 9, 1880)

* * *

W. S. Home was presented with a ten pound girl on Saturday morning last. Heretofore we have abstained from mentioning girl babies, but as this is Mr. Home's first effort we shall deviate for the purpose of encouragement. If at first you don't succeed, try, try again. (June 18, 1880)

* * *

Where are our pioneers? Those who, in the dark days of '74, gazed upon the wolf of want, stared at the tiger of trouble and viewed, with indifference, the signal fires of the innocent Utes upon the mountain sides; those old pathfinders, who encountered pestilence and bumped up against famine; who wintered on faith and summered on hope; who robbed their abnormal carcasses in the cuticle of the coyote, encased their hoofs in gunny sacks and untangled their matted locks with the thorns of the cacti. Those self-sacrificing souls, who existed for years without seeing a gospel squirter; for months without a revised edition; for weeks and weeks without ever gazing upon a church stew, or a soul inspiring tract. Civilization has robbed us of all that was primitive and

dear. Cap. Cline, that lonely old stiff, whose voice once passed current for opedeldoe for the crowd, is now demonotized. Steve Alridge was inveigled into the greenback party and found relief in suicide. Big Mouthed Clay married a Mormon and the vigilance committee gave her a divorce. Rat Trap James fell in love with a government mule and now languishes in Fort Leavenworth. Old Tanner inadvertently drank some of his own whisky and went out over the range to the unknown beyond. Oregon Bill is assistant surgeon in a government slaughter house. Brownie Lea is dealing stud horse at Del Norte and Parson Hoge is monkeying with the ewe lambs in the sinful hamlet of Durango. Out of the multitude, but few have been chosen. (November 24, 1882)

* * *

Gunnison is enjoying a scandal. The average Gunnison female is not compelled to sit around and wait for some enterprising cuss to come along and betray her—punctuality is the Gunnisonites noblest grip. (January 19, 1883)

* * *

A big, beefy, burly, bully, a two-legged animal named C. C. Joy, who is a member of Leadville's council and a shining radical light of Lake County, recently knocked down and brutally kicked in the face of Ed. Cowan, city editor of the Leadville Herald. He had no provocation for the brutal assault, and did it apparently to keep his hand in, and because like all things, (we will not say men), he hates intelligence and is a sworn enemy of newspaper men. He belongs to the class—happily nearly extinct—that delighted in the days of the peculiar institution in burning school houses and mobbing school teachers. He is a coward as well as a bully, and because he is an alderman (God save the mark) he goes around with a big revolver, which he is always ready to pull on slight provocation. This big tub of guts weighs over two hundred pounds while his victim weighs less than one hundred and fifty. He was let out on straw bail, and since that time he has strutted the streets of Leadville, boasting that he intends to serve other newspaper men in the same way. In fact, the dirty, unhung scoundrel has a record, having been once tried for murder in Bloomington, Ills. Judge Shackelford, of Gunnison, was one of the attorneys that helped save his cowardly neck. If there is not enough manhood left in the city council of Leadville to purge

their body of that contemptible cowardly cur, the people, the fearless miners of Leadville, should take the matter in hand and make such an example of this stinking mass of putrifaction that will deter other cowardly sons of she canines from exercising their yellow dog instincts. On general principles we are opposed to lynch law, but this is one of the occasions where this MULDOON'S opposition won't count. Hang the dirty, cowardly cur! (September 14, 1883)

* * *

This Muldoon has never been very badly mashed on General Hamill, but when a blackmailer, cowardly cur and miserable little sneak like Jesse Randall of the Georgetown Courier, takes it upon himself to blacken the character of as good and public-spirited a citizen as Bill Hamill, we propose to chip in. We have known this man Randall lo, these many years; we have known him to be a whining cur; a puppy who has never had a good word to say of any person, unless he was of the same groveling disposition as himself; by instinct a thief who would purloin everything good in the character of a man, woman or child, and flaunt to the world through the columns of his patent outside poster, all that is bad; an enviable little wretch, who would betray Christ for a few shekles of silver; a would-be-God-and-morality-Uriah Heap villain, who is never seen among men, but manages by his Paul Pry propensities, to hear all of the gossip and scandal going on in the community, and hastens at once to print such stuff in his poster, and then cries, "I am better than thou." Hell is full of such scoundrels. N.B.—This is not slander. (September 5, 1884)

* * *

Ouray has two vacant churches, but the dance-houses are running on full time, and the stallion pokah artist sitteth at the head of the table. Oh! for an earthquake—a great big one. (April 24, 1885)

* * *

Breckenridge is organizing a young ladies' brass band. Should such a misfortune overtake Ouray we shall migrate. The very thought of going to see our best girl and have her bring forth a big toot horn, puff her cheeks out, close her eyes and burst a corset string in trying to make wind enough to create a disturbance in the community would be more than we could endure this hot weather. (July 3, 1885)

And now that Patti has departed from Denver, "sassiety" in that village is awakening to the fact that it mistook Scalchi for the high-priced songstress. Great town that for culture and—chippies. (March 4, 1887)

* * *

Two alleged cow-punchers were arrested last week and fined for fast riding through the streets of Ouray, but in each case the fines were small and will be no bar from further funny business of a like kind. These fellows who wear sombreros and big spurs and pose as cow-boys when loafing around town and make it a business to show themselves off, and tear through the streets as though the place was too small for them, should bump against justice that means something. A light fine is simply a bid for them to go out and do it all over again. Children are in danger of losing their lives from this kind of recklessness, and if any of them ever do get hurt, the b-a-d man with a lariat will find his remains dangling from the end of it without the trouble of going to law about it. Attention has been called to this time and again through the local papers, and if it ain't stopped someone will hear something drop. (May 29, 1891)

* * *

An Idaho Springs woman asks a divorce from her husband upon the grounds that he went to bed with his boots on. Here in Ouray the average husband is considered extremely attentive if he gets to bed in any shape—especially with his own wife. Idaho Springs must be a swell town. (November 13, 1891)

* * *

With the new year the MULDOON enters upon Vol. XIII. Thirteen years of missionary work among the Ute Indians and boddleswayed Republicans affords an experience that is not all sunshine, but during all the vicissitudes of sentiment moulding upon the Colorado frontier, the MULDOON has managed to maintain a position as the "brightest, ablest and best of Colorado weeklies." The amount of money we have made and saved is but a microbe in comparison with the fun we have had, yet the boon of perfect health, combined with a disposition to meet care with a smile and take life as it comes, is more than ample reward for those who labor for love—and revenge. (January 2, 1891)



AN ARMED NEUTRALITY.

From THE BOULDER DAILY CAMERA

A SUNDAY SERMON

A word with our readers this morning. A word in all soberness of intention, candidness of purpose. The bells will ring that will summon most of you to church. Your respective individualities, your interests and selfish purposes of a week, will be all forgotten. You will meet to worship God in your own way, by your own methods and in accordance with your individual acceptance of the divine sacrifice. . . .

Mothers, where were your girls last night; where the night before; where were they and what were they doing each and every night of the week? Do you know? Do you care? Was it in the home circle, was it in the Dancing Academy, was it with some gay and festive drummer or "lark" of a boy—where was your girl? Let the mothers answer if they can.

Fathers, you have left to your wives the care of your daughters. Business has engrossed your attention. You have had no time to watch your boys. Were they last night locked arms with some dissolute character, do their breaths smell of the nauseous cigarette? Have they the entree of the gilded saloon; are they the patrons of the more gilded palaces of vice? Do you know or do you care? . . .

STARTLING ASSERTIONS

Where were you [young man] one night last week? Did you attend the Dancing Academy and did you go from there with some girl, several years younger than you, to a public house and then and there indulge in orgies that would bring disgrace upon your own family and upon that of the victim of your folly?

The Camera has positive, indisputable information that you did and but awaits the demand from the proper source to publish your name, young man, and make an affidavit to the truth of the statement.

IT IS GENERAL

You are not one young man. There are several of you and you have accomplished the social, moral and physical ruin of, at least, a dozen of the brightest and apparently best young ladies of Boulder. Your course has been watched. The Camera has refrained from touching this matter for several reasons, one being that it had hoped to spare the authors of this social plague and to bring them to their better senses; the other, that the city furnished the scene of this modern system of licentiousness might be spared so ignominious an exposure. . . .

What are the mothers of Boulder thinking about? Do they not know that their daughters have retired to their rooms and subsequently appeared upon the streets, the alleys, in the hacks and restaurants and other places of the city? The men about town know these things, talk about them and flippantly speak of the virtue and personal charms of these girls. Virtue ranks low in the market when robust men speak disparagingly of girls. The writer has been familiar with all classes of men, from the lowest to the highest, and never before heard such free spoken sentiments, such a universal expression of epithets as is now the daily vogue. The mothers are to blame. The fathers are reckless. . . .

This paper is, also authoritatively advised that one or two va-

cant rooms to the rear of Camplin's Dancing Academy have been employed for improper, vile and ruinous purposes during the dances held at that place.

No blame attaches to Professor Camplin or his methods. He has acted the part of a gentleman, and so far as The Camera is advised, has not been cognizant of the assignations of which the four walls of these rooms would be living and terrible witnesses. . . .

SIMPLY HORRIBLE

The Camera can prove that more than one young lady, standing high in the social scale of Boulder's society has fallen a victim of the wiles of the roue and the scalpel of the surgeon. . . .

A high moral tone is needed. More well directed espionage is required. The preachers in the pulpits of this town today can have no higher incentive for prayer than that extended them in The Camera's free offering of melancholy facts. (April 24, 1892)

* * *

Students of the University will not be denied their right to have fun providing they do not impinge the rights of citizens by forcibly taking their persons or disturbing their slumbers at an hour when most people are asleep. Not every man can participate in the keen sense of pleasure experienced by University students in hoisting citizens skyward in a blanket. That species of idiocy has a peculiar charm for the side-degree imbecile and not infrequently results in broken arms and legs. As a revival of ancient and classic sports, the blanket game may be interesting, but slugging is not pretty, it is not nice and should be relegated as a practice unworthy [of] sons of noble fathers and mothers of this commonwealth. Let the boys have all the fun they desire with each other but let the spirit of hazing begin and end with themselves. The citizen who told the party last night that he would shoot if hands were laid upon him was justified in his threat and would have been justified in its execution. (September 28, 1895)

* * *

Dave Day and Frank Hartman, two well known newspaper men of Durango after carrying on a bitter warfare through their respective papers for months, met on the streets of town last night and exchanged shots with each other. Though they fired several bullets apiece, neither was hurt. The duel was the natural out-

come of the foolish back-country style of journalism which leads one editor to hate another. Personal journalism is never so despicable as when it is directed against a professional rival. And in our judgment nothing is more tiresome reading. We have a sneaking professional regret that the Durango editors have displayed such wretched marksmanship. (May 19, 1903)

THE REAL ISSUE

The Camera does not pretend, nor has it ever declared, that the leaders of the Better Boulder movement are not decent respectable citizens. Everybody knows they are.

The trouble with them is that they are actuated, controlled and moved by an un-American spirit. They are so busy reforming other people and so hysterical in their efforts to make everybody conform to their own ideas that they neglect attention to their own infirmities. They don't grasp an idea. The idea grasps them, takes possession of them and drives out of their heads all other ideas. They at once conclude that they have a mission and that mission is to go out and sandbag everybody whose opinions do not square with their own. This peculiarity was in the baggage of their ancestors when they landed at Plymouth Rock.

These brave old ancestors left their native land to be free to hold and express their beliefs, and after getting comfortably settled in the new world proceeded to persecute and burn those who did not believe in the things they did. Fortunately for all of us, the seeds of real liberty they inadvertently dropped in the New England sand took root and flourished and the fruits thereof blessed them along with the rest of the human race.

A touch of the old Pilgrim spirit is a good thing in any community, that is to say, a little of it, just enough to give it a flavor like unto a few drops of vanilla in a barrel of ice cream.

But once let that spirit dominate, and the result is as deadly as the torrid winds that sweep the Sahara, withering all things with its fiery touch. That is what happened in the city of Boulder, is it not so? You know it is. The people will not submit to be governed by this spirit of persecution. This is America. Freedom of thought, liberty of conscience, personal right and equality before the law came high but the people paid the price. They will not yield one of these at the behest of blind-eyed prejudice.

There is open revolt in Boulder against misgovernment that has clogged and impeded the flow of life politic. We want to restore heart action that will send the bright red current of hope and enterprise through the whole public system, filling the now empty dinner pail, bringing back sparkling eyes to the depressed and disconsolate.

There is not only open revolt but there is also a quiet determination on the part of many citizens to do their part on election day toward making "Boulder a place to live and a place to make a living in." (April 2, 1909)

"REV." SUNDAY GOES MAD

"Rev." William Sunday lost his temper last night and indulged in a ten-minute tirade in which the editor of *The Camera* was the subject of such appellations as a "skunk," etc. The excited individual from Freeport, Bellport, Canon City and towns of like size repeated his allusion to this paper as a small affair, deplored the fact that the manager of his continuous performance had retained its influential columns and otherwise indulged his propensity for slang, abuse and innuendo. By indirection he put the idea in the heads of his audience that he had been referred to as a "foul mouthed degenerate," and wanted the people to think that what we have said of him is "an insult to the good people of this town."

We are afraid Billy takes himself too seriously. We think we discover signs that ultimately he will conclude that he is a splendid specimen of Christian manhood sent by Omnipotence to wash the world clean of its sins at so much per wash. Peter the Hermit got that idea. Schlatter finally worked himself up to that position. Long humbugging and bamboozling of the people frequently obsesses even as bright minds as Billy possesses. In small towns such as men of this caliber work they usually meet such success, thanks to brazen pretense and the unusual gift of organization, that newspapers rarely dare to question a detail of their campaign.

Beginning their meetings with appeals for money—always money, money, money—they, by succession of prayer meetings, by the methods of the up-to-date political manager, by appeals cunningly directed to capture the immature mind and the emotionally constructed of maturer fellow beings, capture quite a following

of good, bad and indifferent. Your real reformer is intolerant of criticism and your imitator of Moody and Talmadge is too cunning not to know the value of intolerance as a side-show to the affairs of the main tent. "Billy" has fared well here.

Wednesday he consigned the editor of this paper to Hell, said we were already there and last night intimated the desire to physically chastise us. If we have read Billy at all we have read with admiration his lurid description of Hell. There is no such heat anywhere. Modern chemistry has failed to devise heat comparable with Hell's heat in intensity. It is so hot it is white. A poor mortal consigned to Sunday's conception of Hell just toasts and toasts and roasts and roasts and squirms in a delicious torment perpetually, ad libitum, world without end. He loses his appetite, has his wife's relations laughing at him and seemingly, though basted with the joyful tears of the angels in Billy's department, never gets real done.

And Billy, not out of the hardness of his heart but because he lost his temper, wants to add to all that the chastisement of his own hands physically developed by much playing of baseball and his sinews strengthened by daily plunges, massage and the physical training of which he boasts. To our notion a man in Hell ought to be let alone. We have always felt charitable to a corpse, and one in Hell should be especially immune from further chastisement.

Speaking of the editor of *The Camera*, William iterates:

He has slandered, villified and blackmailed me ever since I have been in this section. I have stood here and taken his abuse. I have been a gentleman. He has poured out his swill buckets of slander on me just enough. There has been more slander and more mean things said about me in that sheet than in all the other newspapers where I have been. I have taken about all I am going to from it. Go down to the high school and ask them if I am a foul-mouthed degenerate; go to the University and ask them if I am a foul-mouthed degenerate.

It is an insult to the good people of this town, the good people of this town who have taken me into their homes.

Then William asks all to stand up who believe in him and they all stand up. Of course, why should they not when he represented some paper had referred to him as a "foul-mouthed degenerate?" The impression he intended to create was that *The Camera* had thus referred to him. Did his cause need or justify the lie? Who

blackmailed Billy? Now all stand up and sit down on the editor who blackmailed him. Who "slandered" William? Get up and stand for Christ and against his slandered apostle! Picturesque! Inspiring! Effective! And all because, if our stenographic notes are correct Billy led his readers to believe we had "slandered, villified and blackmailed" him. Is it not possible to evangelize and be decently honest? We don't know. We believe in religion. We believe it is best that men be anchored to some faith even though uncertain of our own. . . .

Now, William sweet William, sanctified William, would it be too much to ask that you have a little common honesty mixed with your religion? What is to happen to the men ultimately, what the reward of a sanctified, purified individual who led his audience to rise to his wand on the supposition that a Boulder paper had "blackmailed" him? Does he get just a corner of Hell, "the lobster," or the whole place?

Considering your pretensions to sanctification and your methods in practice, haven't we accorded you, out of respect for the Boulder Evangelistic Association, or for other reasons, the widest latitude, extreme courtesy, even the consideration of much ignoring of many foolish utterances? Have you not abused citizens who manfully opposed a violation of a city ordinance, calculated by good but misguided man? Have we not permitted your press agent to exaggerate the size of your audiences, the number of conversions and to extol your sermons as the very apotheosis of fervid eloquence, notwithstanding we had the sermons in type long before they were physically and painfully and extemporaneously produced? Blackmail, nit! Slander, nit! Abuse, nit! How easy these terms come to us "lobsters" after four or five weeks of iter and reiteration.

But enough, Willie. Let us for a moment contemplate David, the splendor of whose psalms furnish common ground for admiration. David was sore beset but he declared out of a mouthful of wisdom: "He that ruleth his own spirit is better than he that taketh a city."

The sum and substance of all religion, we take it, is control of the spirit through God or man. The man who loses his own control has far to go as an apostle before he may hope for lasting reformation in his disciples. Therefore, William, remembering "To

thine own self be true," first curb that irascible temper of thine,
pass the hat and sure shall be thy earthly reward. We in the Hell
you sent us to, salute ye. (October 1, 1909)

AFTER CHRISTMAS

By A. KIRBY CONGDON

Men came busy through the town,
dismantled trees
and tore the tinsel down
heaping branches in funeral mounds
and lifted chopped off trunks
of forest kings
to be carted to the dumping ground
like bodies accumulated from an unnamed plague.

For broken stars from the tips of trees,
hanging strands of untangled wreathes
or discarded evergreens,
no one sings,
no one prays.

The smell of needles disinfects the air.
The doors are closed upon the street,
shades of windows, drawn against the town
where Christ's green body
goes rumbling, rumbling down.

THE APPARITION

By CHARLES EDWARD EATON

What can one speak of when the pear trees loom,
So white, the scent so fragrant and so tart—
The old frustrations never meant for lies?
No, this is the kyrielle of every heart.
There's a radiance hidden somewhere in the room,
We have gone outside too often, looking to be wise.

"A radiance?" you say and look around
As though you scented freshness in my mood.
"Which of us will find it then?" And your fingers
Unwind a darkness there so often wound.
"Call it a ghost of truth that lingers,"
I say. "Something that haunts our solitude."

What can we speak of?—oh, my dear,
Speak of the very thing we fear.
Speak to the ghost that seeks its place,
Glowing briefly, whitely, in either face.
Truth waits forever to inherit,
Among the ruin of eyes, an ancient child of spirit.

The lake

GEORGE CUOMO

The rain began a few minutes after midnight. The townspeople had waited up for it restlessly, and now as their worries faded they became noisy and jovial. Confident all along, the old people looked on quietly and did not share the excitement, but the younger men and women called happily to their neighbors across yards:

"Right on time, eh?"

"Yes sir; right on time."

The children could hardly be controlled, for it was hours past their bedtime and the wait had been dull. They splashed along the streets until early morning, their shouts echoing through the rain-soaked town. As a final resort, their parents forced them to go to bed by threatening not to take them to the celebration.

It was still raining at two o'clock the next afternoon, not a hard rain, but steady and sure.

Miss Wayne was sitting alone in her office, staring out at the deserted town square. Almost everyone else in town was at the celebration. Her slouch had twisted her blue suit out of fit, and the material billowed in great wrinkles over her large figure. She was dabbling with her fingers at the straying ends of her gray hair when she heard a knock. She dropped her feet from the waste-paper basket and pulled at her skirt. "Come in."

The door swung open slowly and a young man's round, wet face peered in. Reassured by Miss Wayne's welcoming nod, the visitor smiled and entered briskly, carrying a new leather briefcase. He was about eighteen, short, and somewhat plump. He unbuttoned and shook out his dripping parka, showing his plaid shirt and bright red tie. When he removed his rain hat, Miss Wayne saw his hair matched his tie, and both picked up the healthy color of his full cheeks. He wore city clothes, flashy, but there was no hardness in his face, none of the city toughness. His brown eyes were soft and boyish, and when he smiled they seemed liquidly full of youthful enthusiasm. Miss Wayne, helplessly smiling back,

felt a little taken in. His brightness and spontaneity seemed startling on this dull day of steady gray rain.

"Afternoon there, ma'm," he called out cheerfully. "Is your county clerk around?"

"I'm him, sonny. Alison Wayne."

"Oh? I expected to find a man."

"So did I," Miss Wayne said. "But you never can tell."

The boy laughed, his round eyes sparkling. "I'm Charles Portland," he said confidentially. "I work for the Bureau of Rivers, Harbors and Lakes up at the capital. They sent me down here to—"

The phone rang. He shrugged, sat on a chair and stared out the window.

Miss Wayne picked up the phone. "Yes . . . Uh-huh . . . Really? Well, you're a little late; he's right here . . . Oh? That should be fun . . . Yeah, of all days . . . Of course I'll try, I don't want to see any trouble either. You better get in touch with Royson . . . Okay."

She hung up and turned to Charles. "So it's about the lake. Today was a lousy day to come."

"I know," Charles said. He was munching on an apple now, and offered Miss Wayne a bite, but she shook her head. "We didn't figure on the rain."

"That's pretty funny, you know," Miss Wayne said. They were silent a moment. "Do you have all the do-dads?"

Charles nodded enthusiastically and took a brown paper bag from his briefcase. Miss Wayne crowded close to peer in as he brought out a reel of flat line with a dangling weight. "Beautiful, isn't it?" he said proudly. "A hundred feet."

"Never do it."

"I've got two more like it," Charles said quickly. "There isn't a deeper lake in the state." He laughed again and bit into his apple.

"It's silly going out in this weather. You catch that northbound train coming through in thirty minutes, sonny, and I'll have the measurement tied up in a pink ribbon on your boss' desk by Thursday morning. Free of charge and results guaranteed."

He shook his head. "We've really lost faith in you people. Sent a request down here months ago and—"

"You know how things get misplaced," Miss Wayne said. "Even lost a birth certificate once. Hell of a commotion. But I promise . . . Thursday morning, no fail."

"I couldn't leave now that I'm here," Charles said with sudden seriousness. "I've got orders to get it myself, no matter what. I'd appreciate it, though, if you'd give me a lift to the lake. Otherwise, I'll walk."

"Isn't much point in that," Miss Wayne said resignedly. She went to get her raincoat. "You drive, though. The wet roads make me nervous."

Charles, chatting carelessly, sped the office station wagon over the narrow, slippery road leading to the mountain range beyond town. The rain splashing against the windshield didn't bother him at all, and he seemed to enjoy it when the skidding car zigzagged around curves. Miss Wayne strained her feet against the floorboard, and hardly spoke until they reached the lake.

Charles followed her through the rain to the door of the single cabin near the lake, which was situated on table land at the crotch of two of the mountains that enclosed the town. Miss Wayne pounded until the cabin door was opened by a thin, wizened man in a dirty undershirt and old trousers held up by suspenders. His face was grizzled, his hair uncut and uncombed.

"Let us in, Jasi. We're getting soaked."

"Go away. I got no business with you."

Miss Wayne glared at him through the rain dripping from her cap, then marched resolutely forward and pushed him aside with a wave of her hand. Charles hurried in behind her, barely making it before Jasi slammed the door.

"There's all kinds of laws against stuff like this," Jasi said. Clothes and shoes lay about in the dust and long bamboo fishing poles slanted against the wall in one corner. The old furniture, with stuffing bulging out of numerous holes, smelled damp and musty.

"This here is Mr. Charles Portland," Miss Wayne said.

"This here is my cabin," Jasi replied.

"We need your boat, Jasi. Mr. Portland's going to measure the lake."

"What?"

"He's got all the do-dads in his little bag there. He'll show them if you want."

"Sure," Charles said readily. "Three lines."

Jasi stood perfectly still, his expression rigid. He walked over to Miss Wayne, leaned his emaciated body forward and peered unbelievably into her eyes. "You're crazy, Allie. I always said that, you know. I had you spotted from the beginning."

Miss Wayne turned to Charles with a hopeless shrug. "I'm awfully sorry, sonny. Guess we can't do it after all."

"Oh, but we have to," Charles said. "I thought you understood that."

"Anytime you two wanna leave," Jasi said, "just go ahead. I won't hold you to goodbye's." He shuffled across the floor and into another room of the cabin, closing the door behind him.

Charles looked at Miss Wayne, then began to laugh. "He's sure a funny one. But we'll have to get him to change his mind."

"Jasi's real stubborn. Why don't you just tag along home and let me send the figures like I promised. No point making a fuss."

The rumbling noise of approaching automobiles broke through the steady drumming of the rain.

"What's that?" Charles asked. When Miss Wayne remained stiffly still and did not answer, he peered out through the cloudy, rain spattered window. "Some people coming here." He watched them walk soberly through the rain to the cabin. The sudden heavy pounding made Miss Wayne start.

"It's Mr. Royson and a bunch from the celebration," Jasi said, rushing in from the other room. The sound of the rain suddenly intensified and the whole doorway seemed filled by the huge figure of a man in an oilskin raincoat. He nodded to Jasi, who stepped back in silence and let him enter. The people behind him clustered forward to the threshold, and waited, looking in with blank, serious faces.

The man in the oilskin, dwarfing everyone in the room, greeted Miss Wayne with a slight bow of his head, and then stared at Charles. Only the sounds of the rain disturbed the silence. The man stepped forward. "Royson," he said as he shook Charles' hand in his massive grip. "Peter Royson. I'm the mayor."

"Sure glad to meet you," Charles said pleasantly to the huge man. "Maybe you can help us out."

"We came to invite you to our celebration," Royson said. "Anniversary celebration. Plenty of hot dogs, cooked sauerkraut, black mickeys, beans; some beer if you care to indulge."

Charles shook his head through the whole list. "Oh, no; but thanks anyhow. You go right along, though. Don't let me interrupt anything."

"You won't come?"

"I don't think so."

"Then I'm afraid you'll have to leave," Royson said.

Charles stared at him. "Why?"

Royson hesitated, as if searching for a phrase. "We live here somewhat apart from the ordinary movement of things. We're set in our ways."

Charles could not help smiling. "Like having picnics in the rain. . . ."

Royson was silent a moment. "Perhaps you don't understand."

"I guess not," Charles replied. He glanced at the people standing in the rain outside the open door. "I have to do what I'm supposed to," he said. "They gave me strict orders not to let anyone stop me. They said I could get a state marshal if I had to."

Peter Royson remained quiet. Then he said to Charles calmly, "It is not good to force things." He motioned the people at the door to enter. They filed in slowly, silently, grouping against a wall. There were about twenty of them, men and women, and they stared with a dull, hypnotic stolidity at Charles, the one stranger in their midst. A momentary fear held him, but when he laughed it dissolved.

"Would you go to the other room?" Royson asked. "I'd like to speak with my townspeople."

"Sure," Charles said with a shrug. "But what's there to talk about?"

"I'll go with him," Miss Wayne said quickly before Royson answered. "Maybe I can do something." She herded the not unwilling Charles before her into the other room and shut the door. Charles sat on Jasi's unmade bed, his arms out tent-fashion, his hands on the mattress. Cocking his head, he stared at Miss Wayne sideways. "I like doing things in the rain. It's a good feeling, don't you think?"

"You're so damned happy, you're blind. You don't know what you're getting into."

"I like doing things," he said.

"Why can't you be a good boy and go home?"

"I'm not a boy," Charles said, jumping up from the bed and walking away from Miss Wayne. He stopped abruptly and turned to look at her. "What kind of an agent would I be if I went home? They wouldn't think much of me, would they? And they've told me they think a lot of me now. They've got plans for me. This is my first important assignment."

He pulled the covers over the rumpled sheets and lay down on the bed, his hands under his neck, then rolled his eyes toward Miss Wayne who stood, bulky and hesitant, a few feet away. "Why is everyone trying to stop me?" he asked. "I'm not stupid, you know. I see these things. I just don't care."

Miss Wayne stared at him. "They feel the lake is theirs and you've got no right coming along bothering it, at anytime, least of all today. It's the anniversary of the town's founding. That's what the celebration's for on the lake; they have one every year. You're the last person in the world they want to see today."

Charles motioned confidently toward the single window in the room. "Jasi's boat is probably right out front. I can just hop out and row myself."

"Don't be insane. They'd never let you do it. They're not going to let you anyhow. They're going to send you away."

The door opened and Jasi beckoned them inside. The townspeople were standing as before, with Royson in the middle of the room, away from the others, his arms crossed over his thick chest. His eyes were heavy, seeming almost weary.

"We've decided to let you go ahead," he said. "Jasi will take you in his boat."

"What?" Miss Wayne cried out. Royson looked at her commandingly.

"That's swell," Charles said pleasantly, with no show of surprise.

"The decision was not mine," Royson said. "It was an act of faith on the part of all of us. . . ."

"You're all out of your minds," Miss Wayne blurted. "You can't really think he's—"

"Shut up!" Royson told her coldly. "You don't understand any more than he does."

After a moment's silence, he turned again to Charles. "It was not an easy choice, Mr. Portland, but violence . . ." He hesitated, ". . . violence can only be a last resort. A weak faith is not faith at all."

"I'm going too," Miss Wayne said. "I'm not letting that kid out in the boat without me."

Royson's lips were tight. He nodded slowly. "All right. If Mr. Portland doesn't mind."

"Oh, no," Charles said. "That's fine with me. Let's go."

Hesitating, Royson glanced about the room, then turned and led the others through the doorway. Many more townspeople had arrived, and a large crowd mulled about in the rain, splitting slowly to form an aisle for Royson and the others, then closing up behind them and following along. Their silent, watching faces were sullen. Raincoats billowed and snapped loudly in the wind, which had grown stronger, and the rain came with increased force.

Royson dropped back to Charles. "Weather's worse."

"I don't mind."

"We could do it some other time," Miss Wayne said anxiously. "You could come another day."

"I like the rain," Charles said.

Almost as he spoke, an old woman broke from the crowd with a scream, snatched the briefcase from under his arm and ran toward the lake, crying out unintelligibly into the wind and the rain. In the sudden commotion, the shouting people shoved and scrambled to see what was happening. Charles started after the woman. Running quickly over the sanded beach, he caught her at the edge of the lake, but too late. The briefcase splashed into the water ten or twelve feet out. Charles let go of the woman and rushed out to get it. He walked back from the knee deep water and stood for a moment staring at the thin old woman, who was now struggling pathetically within the grip of Miss Wayne's strong arms. Shrugging, Charles turned away with a smile and started again toward the boat. With his wet hand, he tried to brush some of the water from his new briefcase, but it made little difference in the rain.

"Drive him away," the old woman shouted after him. "He wants to destroy us."

The people watching her being led away did not protest, but stirred somewhat from their passiveness. When they formed small, restless groups and began to talk among themselves, only the powerful physical presence of Royson seemed to control their uneasiness.

"I warned you," Miss Wayne said flatly to Charles after she had run to catch up with him again. There was a sound of fear in her voice.

"I have to do what I'm supposed to," Charles said. "What kind of an agent would I be if I went back?"

The rain beat heavily upon them, while a thick haze rose from the lake and fused with the settling darkness of the late afternoon. Jasi went down to one knee and flipped the boat over to spill the water. Charles got in and helped Miss Wayne maneuver her bulk over the gunnels. Both sat, quiet and huddled, on the wet plank that served as stern seat. The people stood watching a few feet away, equally silent.

"We'll follow in the other boat," Royson said over the noise of the wind and the rain.

Jasi nodded. "It's about a hundred yards up the bank." He shoved off the boat and leaped in. After settling himself at the oarlocks, he began rowing the boat slowly toward the center of the lake, which merged into a great mass of grayness at the edge of Charles' vision. The rain swept down on them in flooding bursts, seeming to get worse every minute. As the water deepened in the bottom of the boat, Miss Wayne began bailing out with a tin can.

"Keep meaning to fix that hole," Jasi muttered between grunting oar strokes.

"You'd drown before you'd fix anything."

Charles fetched another can from under the seat and helped. "Too bad it's such a bad day," he said. "I'm really lazy, you know. I like doing things the easy way."

Miss Wayne paused in her efforts to look at him. "It always rains."

"What do you mean?"

"On the anniversary."

Charles laughed and dashed a can full of water over the side. "Go on, you're kidding."

She shook her head. "Every year I wait for it not to rain, so I can watch the whole stupid thing crumble in their faces; but every year it rains."

"Every year since when?"

"As far back as they have records. Some years it doesn't rain in town, but always on the lake. It replenishes it, see. All this means something to them, and every year when it happens it reassures them."

"About what?" Charles had stopped bailing out; his mobile features were quiet as he stared at Miss Wayne.

"About this whole foolish mess with the lake. But I wouldn't push them. I don't understand them and I wouldn't push them."

Charles' slow, forming smile was about to break into a laugh when a loud thump that he could feel as well as hear cut it short. "What was that?"

"A rock," Miss Wayne said. A few more splashed in the water around them. She continued bailing out. "This wasn't a good day to come."

"They let me go ahead," Charles said.

"I know. Isn't that crazy? They think you're not going to make it. They really believe you won't make it."

He looked up at her. "I don't understand you."

"They think it's bottomless."

Charles couldn't help laughing, but then he felt self-conscious and was suddenly quiet. "That's crazy. . . ."

"The whole damn thing is crazy. But one step leads to another, and if you're going to believe anything you might as well swallow the whole shebang. They didn't start out believing that; it just grew on them."

"You don't believe it, do you?"

"They consider me an absolute atheist around here."

"Mr. Royson?"

"He believes it."

"And the others?"

"Every one of them."

"I don't believe it," Charles said. "I don't believe it at all."

Jasi stopped rowing and said they were in the middle. Charles

nodded and stared over Jasi's shoulder at the expanse of darkness surrounding the little patch of visible lake. He sat huddled up in the rain, and then slowly opened his briefcase and took out the bag with the three reels of plumb line and a short wooden stick. The wet paper was falling apart, so he crumpled it into a ball and threw it overboard. It floated away on the dark water.

"Do you think one will be enough?" he asked.

Miss Wayne laughed. "What a silly question."

"We'll try it anyhow," Charles said. "It should be plenty." He placed the stick through the eye of the reel and dropped the weight overboard. The reel spun as the weight sank heavily into the murky water, pulling the line after it. Miss Wayne leaned forward and watched. Jasi, his eyes on Charles, pawed the water with his oars to keep the boat from drifting. The sound of the line sang dully in their ears.

The stick jerked in Charles' hands. The end of the line had been reached. He continued to stare at the empty reel for some time. "I guess we'll need two. It's deeper than I thought."

He brought the reel and stick into his lap and unhooked the line from the core of the reel. Then he removed the weight from the second reel and knotted the two lines together.

The other boat, carrying four men, approached out of the rain and darkness, its prow cutting slowly through the water. Royson was standing in the center, his enormous figure looming out of the haze. "Any luck?" he shouted over.

At first no one answered. Jasi shrugged and nodded toward Miss Wayne. "He's dropped one line," Miss Wayne said finally. "He's putting the second over now."

"How many does he have?"

She hesitated again. "Three."

Charles put the second reel on the stick and held it over the side of the boat. The whirring sound began once more as the line spun quickly off the revolving reel.

"Sorry about the rocks," Royson called. "A few hotheads. Were you hit?"

"No," Miss Wayne said.

The rain was coming down harder than ever now, and despite Jasi's efforts, the boat was being tossed about in the growing sweeps

of the wind. The water in the bottom was up to their ankles, but Miss Wayne had for some time ceased bailing. She sat and stared at the boy's figure hunched over the side of the boat.

"How's it coming?" Royson asked.

Miss Wayne watched the thickness of the line on the reel grow thinner. "Nothing yet."

Then the whirring stopped. The second reel was empty. Charles looked at Miss Wayne. "It shouldn't be this deep. . . ."

"Why don't you go?" Miss Wayne pleaded as Charles knotted the second and third lines. "Say you couldn't make it and leave."

Charles shook his head quickly. He turned around for the third time and held the reel over the water, gazing for a few seconds at the length of line between his hands and the surface of the lake, as if trying to follow with his eyes to its end.

"What's happening?" Royson's voice boomed from the other boat.

"Nothing," Miss Wayne answered. "Stop haunting us."

Charles released the last reel and once more the line began to disappear beneath the dark, wind blown surface of the lake. Then the whirring stopped.

"Has it hit?" Miss Wayne asked anxiously.

Charles shook his head. "I stopped it. I was afraid it was going too fast."

"What difference does it make?"

"I'd rather it went in slower."

"What does it read?"

Charles raised the line to his eyes. "Two hundred and twenty-eight." He leaned again over the water. The rain was streaming down his face. Holding the ends of the stick with the four fingers of each hand, he controlled the flow of the line with his thumbs, pressing them against the reel to stop it, lifting them to allow it to unwind. Each time he stopped, he read the figure loud enough for Miss Wayne, but not Jasi, to hear.

"Two-thirty-seven . . . two-forty-two . . . fifty-one . . . sixty-three . . . seventy . . . eighty-four—"

"What happened?"

"It's hit," Charles whispered hoarsely.

Miss Wayne jumped forward, her arm on his shoulder. "What's it read?"

"Two-eighty-seven."

"Royson!" Jasi shouted. "Royson! Come here!"

The boat lurched crazily as Miss Wayne sprang up. "Don't call them."

The other boat approached in the haze. "What's wrong?" Royson asked. The tone of his voice had changed.

"Come here!" Jasi repeated.

"You fool," Miss Wayne said. "You fool."

The gigantic figure of Royson grew darker out of the mist, coming up behind Charles.

Miss Wayne whirled around and fell to the boy's shoulders, nearly upsetting the boat. "Drop it," she cried desperately. "Get rid of it."

Charles stared into her eyes, then twisted away and stood up in the center of the boat. "You're just like the others," he said angrily. "You believe it, too."

"Drop it," she pleaded. "Look out!"

He turned from her and saw suddenly behind him Royson, his face set in hatred, a huge oar raised over his head. Charles froze numbly, the reel still in his hands, as if stuck there, as if he were trying to drop it but couldn't. His round face began to form a weak, fearful smile.

"No!" Miss Wayne screamed at Royson. "You don't have to—"

The oar made a thick, crushing sound. Charles' body jackknifed grotesquely into the black water of the lake, rocking the boat sharply. Jasi waited a moment in silence, then started rowing deliberately through the rain toward the shore.

Three poems

TOM BURNAM

CREDO

These things I hate: reluctant zippers
And tonedeaf whistlers early in the morning
And the standard smile of the society-pages
 (all those gay charming expensive teeth!)
And professors who love literature but dislike students
And all people who pity the poor once a year
 (at Christmas-time).
I reject also bottled barbecue-sauce,
The livers of innocent geese,
The fashionable fifteen-to-one Martini,
And the manufactured manners in telephone-company offices.
 (Come here I want you may be gruff, but I like it better
 than I will ask our Mr. Watson to step over for a moment.)
Then there are the complicated rum drinks
Imposed on us by our good neighbors to the south.
 (Can't they stand their own rum neat, tasting of clean wood?)
And I haven't even mentioned parking-lot attendants
Nor foul-tasting tongue-cutting flaps of envelopes
 (nor the wolves who cry Peace, Peace,
 nor the sheep who cry Wolf, Wolf,
 nor the dry old men who say the dry old things
 while their sons dare not think of the future).

SONNET: THE SOUND OF SIRENS

A wordless wailing down the bitter wind
That blows, dry-scattered, all the bits and scraps
Of summer's end along the alleys, thinned
And thumbed to keening, chills the bone and traps
The thought of mourning and the thought of death
Along a steel-bright strand of sound that glints
And glitters. When the quick and fluttering breath
Is calm again, the fading echo hints,
Like dying moans against a shuttered wall,
That in the midst of life no thought abates
The old dun-colored cry, the endless call:
And, still emergent, the occasion waits,
Though solemn bells, slow-tolled for cavaliers,
Sound now like nervous screamings through our years.

SONNET LONG AFTER MARX

Speak not of angels, nor of heavenly things:
Praise rather all the ghosts and hosts of hell.
Break bread with none, and ever shun the springs
That one must, willy-nilly, think upwell
From loyalty and love. The morning's dew,
The evening's sun, the once-enormous sky
Corrupt each other, and the common hue
Is black, is black; we live within a lie
When we praise light, praise love, praise life.
The poisoned cloud, the festering dark within
The common guilt deep-cutting like a knife
That severs brotherhood, the common sin
We share remind us, huddled in the nave,
Of old, suspicious peerings from the cave.

Gun manners

J. D. A. OGILVY

Newspaper accounts of accidents with guns interest me because they reveal the limitations of human stupidity. Despite our vaunted technological advances, one can still avoid blowing his own or his neighbor's head off by following a few simple rules, all of which had been drummed into me by the time I was twelve. I grew up among men who habitually owned and used guns; but on the extremely rare occasions when anyone got shot, someone *meant* to shoot him. To shoot a man intentionally might be wicked, but to shoot a man—or even a cow—by accident was just plain stupid—a damning admission of thick-headedness, fumble-fingeredness, and general incompetence.

In such an atmosphere, the principles of good gun-handling became second nature. Basically, they consisted in treating every gun as if it were cocked and loaded all the time. This led to a certain amount of needless caution but to very little extra trouble. It is just as easy to point a gun at the ground ahead of one as at one's own foot or his neighbor's abdomen, or at the sky as at someone's head. No one was ever hurt by not having an empty gun pointed at him, but one shot from a supposedly empty gun can kill the recipient very dead indeed.

Sooner or later, everyone who handles guns much has one go off when he doesn't expect it to. (It has happened to me at least half a dozen times.) Accidental discharge may result from various mechanical defects in the gun or, more commonly, from carelessness in the man behind it. Whatever the cause, one's relief that the gun was not pointed at anyone was inexpressible. One feels a big enough fool when his gun "lets go" without orders. What he would feel like if it had been pointing at his nearest and dearest, or even a comparative stranger, is one of the many things I hope never to experience.

Conversely, it is a good idea to assume that guns in the hands of others are likely to go off unexpectedly. My left leg is still in working order because I moved it out of the line of fire of a com-

panion's gun a couple of seconds before the gun went off. If you are afflicted with an acquaintance whose gun points the anatomy of his companions as the compass seeks the north, do not go hunting with him. Off the hunting field he may be a prince of good fellows (though he is more likely to be a brainless and inconsiderate lout); but with a gun in his hands he is nothing but an accident looking for a place to happen.

The first rule of good gun-handling, then, is never to point a gun at what one would not be willing to hit. Indoors, of course, this rule must be applied relatively. Better a hole in the ceiling than a hole in the head.

Besides treating guns as dangerous all the time, the experienced gunhandler knows that they are particularly dangerous under certain conditions. One perennial gun-accident story reads roughly like this: "While X was pulling his gun through the fence after him, it went off. He is in critical condition in Y hospital." Another goes: "While Z was pulling his gun out of the car (by the muzzle, of course), it was accidentally discharged. He is survived by. . ."

Perfectionists recommend that before one climbs a fence with a gun or puts it into a wagon or car he should unload it. If X and Z had followed this advice, it would certainly have improved their health. But their basic error was picking up a gun by the muzzle, and thus automatically pointing it at themselves. Pistols should be picked up by the butt and rifles and shotguns by the balance (just ahead of the trigger guard), not nine times out of ten or ninety-nine times out of a hundred, but always. And never is quite soon enough to pull a gun through the fence after one. A gun lying on the seat of a car should always be picked up with the stock towards the gunner, even if doing so involves losing time and a possible shot. Dead men shoot no deer. Any procedure which involves dragging a gun muzzle first towards one past obstacles likely to trip the firing mechanism is suicidal. The same goes for the silly procedure so common in modern detective fiction, movies, and comic strips of reversing a pistol and hitting a man with the butt. Just remember that a gun is not a tack-hammer, and the life you save is almost certain to be your own.

Loading and unloading, particularly unloading, call for special care. Many repeating weapons are unloaded by working each

cartridge into firing position in the chamber and then extracting it. In a good many, it is necessary to drop the hammer gently onto the firing pin, restraining it with the thumb. Failure of thumb and trigger finger to coordinate produces the obvious result. The sportsman who almost removed my left leg was unloading in this way.

Most—if not all—modern weapons at least present an alternative to this method; but it is still sound practice to load and unload outdoors with the gun pointed at an uninhabited mountain or some other equally safe target. A few old-timers held that guns should be kept loaded at all times and be treated accordingly, but it is probably better never to bring a loaded gun, except a pistol kept as “burglar insurance,” into the house.

Another point to bear in mind is that a gun is a deadly piece of precision machinery, not a broom, a mop, a shovel, or a baton. It should be carried and handled accordingly. If one drops or otherwise jars it, he may damage it seriously, even if it does not happen to go off and damage him or his companions more seriously still. There are five standard carries for a rifle or shotgun: on the shoulder, with the muzzle pointing back and up and the hand on the stock; cradled in the elbow, with the muzzle pointing to the back or side and the hand gripping the stock; under the arm, with balance resting on the forearm, the stock to the rear, and the muzzle pointing forward and down; at the trail, with the arm hanging at the side, the muzzle forward, and the hand gripping the balance; and at the ready, with the hands in shooting position and the barrel pointing up and forward across the body. On a slope, the gun is carried by the downhill arm so that if one slips or falls it will not be slammed into the ground. A pistol should be carried shoulder high, with the muzzle pointed up and slightly forward (elbow at full bend).

The carry to use at a given moment depends on the position of one's companions, which muscles are most fatigued, and the probable need to shoot quickly. All are reasonably safe so long as they do not involve pointing the gun at someone else either in carrying it or in bringing it into action; and they vary enough to give a proper carry for any circumstances. Yet on my drives through the country, I am amazed at the number of awkward and dangerous carries I see. A favorite is over the shoulder, stock to

the rear and muzzle down, as if the gun were a shovel. What one is to do if he is taken by surprise by a pheasant or rabbit escapes me. In fact, it would take considerable ingenuity to get into firing position safely even with plenty of time.

Naturally, a badly carried gun is likely to be dropped. Not long ago I saw some misplaced ditch-digger drop a gun butt down with the muzzle pointed squarely at him while attempting to shift it from the "shovel" carry. Luckily it did not go off, and I did not have to pick up the pieces. Two days later, however, I encountered another perennial accident story in the press: "While X was hunting pheasants, the gun slipped from his hands and was accidentally discharged [that is, he dropped it and it went off]. Coroner Y states that an inquest will not be called."

Even if a dropped gun does not go off, it may cause trouble later because its accuracy may be destroyed or its mechanism impaired. The "safety" of a mishandled gun may be ruined, so that it fires unexpectedly. Since the man who drops a gun is usually careless of where he points it, that is likely to make more business for the doctor and the undertaker.

A dropped gun may be picked up with a plugged barrel. Since even the lightest plugging—a bit of rag or a little snow—will ruin the gun and very likely the gunner if it is not removed before the gun is fired, one should inspect the barrel if there is even the faintest suspicion that it is plugged. For the same reason, only raw beginners and cretins ever rest the muzzle of a gun on the ground.

The safest way to use a gun is in complete solitude, and more men would follow this counsel of perfection if it were not for wives. Even if a man has been hunting by himself for years without accident, the average wife is sure that he will break a leg, fall down a mine shaft, or even shoot himself if he goes out alone. Most married men hunt in company to keep peace in the family, and many unmarried men are so young and foolish that they do so voluntarily. Hunting in company quadruples the safety problem, since one must avoid shooting not only himself—a fairly simple matter—but also his companions—a rather more difficult one. Keeping them from shooting him, if he goes out in the wrong company, can be still more difficult. The first rule, of course, is never to go shooting with a damn fool.

The second, which should be followed even when hunting in solitude, is never to shoot until one is sure what he is shooting at. Every year dozens of cows, horses, chipmunks, ghosts, shadows, game warders, hunting partners, and even complete strangers are fired upon under the delusion that they are deer (though there are few grosser solecisms than firing at a man to whom one has not even been introduced). Sometimes they are even hit, but luckily the marksmanship of jackasses who shoot on suspicion is on a par with their intelligence. Even so, the casualties are considerable. A corollary to this rule is to know what is behind the target. The fact that one was shooting only at the pheasant is not going to save the cow in the next field. For the same reason one should be chary of firing at targets on the skyline.

The converse of this rule is not, like Blucher, to advance on the sound of the cannon. When someone just over the ridge cuts loose before there is decent shooting light, *don't* go bounding over to find out what he is shooting at. If he glimpses you, it is likely to be you. Even if it isn't, you stand a fair chance of catching a ricochet in the ribs. Keep the ridge between you and him, and if there is a good solid boulder handy, get that between you too. The chances are he isn't shooting at a deer anyway; and if he should scare one towards you, you improve your chances of a shot by staying quiet and out of sight.

When the fusillade has died down, if you *must* gratify your curiosity, find something solid on the skyline, creep cautiously up to it, and peer around it, exposing yourself as little as possible. Alternatively, advance singing, shouting, and waving a white flag.

The main principle of hunting in company is to be sure of the direction in which it is safe to fire. When shooters are in line, they must stay in line and fire only to the front. Non-shooters should stay behind the line, and any guns they carry should be unloaded. If some of the group are constitutionally incapable of staying in line and keep popping up in unexpected places, go home and play a quiet game of parcheesi. They unquestionably deserve to be shot, but you will be happier if someone else carries out the sentence.

Ricochets limit the width of the arc which it is safe for a shooter in line to cover. Since a bullet can ricochet at close to forty-five degrees from its line of flight, one fired forty-five de-

grees to the flank may ricochet back into the line. Bullets that ricochet even less may make the shooter unpopular, since they have an unpleasant, blood-thirsty whine and sound much closer than they really are. Put a bullet within fifty yards of a man, and he'll swear you missed him by inches. I once spent an uncomfortable half hour crouching behind a large cottonwood tree while a neighbor at target practice sprayed my general area with ricochets, thanks to an inadequate backstop for the target. He was in many ways a good neighbor and had no idea of what he was doing; none of the bullets came within twenty-five yards of me; and my chance of being hit, even if I had not taken cover, was microscopic. Still, I never felt quite the same towards him afterwards.

Both shot and bullets will ricochet on water like a skipped stone, and I have known both to come right into a duck blind when some idiot opposite was shooting at a crippled duck on the water.

A few years ago, Colorado papers published an illustration of the dangers of firing to the flank which was almost too pat to be credible. Two hunters firing at a deer which had run between them each hit and killed the other. Such a neat and final conclusion—like the mutual destruction of Hamlet and Laertes—smacks more of art than of life; and a base and skeptical mind might suspect the reporter of pointing a moral to adorn a tale. Certainly the odds against such an event must be enormous. But less complete catastrophes of this sort are far too common.

As long as large numbers of men handle guns, there will be occasional accidents. But most of the accidents I see reported seem to result from bad training—not from the risks inevitable with firearms. To bring up a child so that he will not be a menace to himself and the community with a gun in his hands demands one of two approaches, neither of which seems to be widely followed today: either never to allow him a gun, toy or real; or to give him a gun and teach him to use it properly.

Every time I see a gang of young hooligans pointing realistic imitations of Colt 45's at each other and everyone else in sight, I shudder, partly at what would have happened to me if I had done such a thing in my youth, but mostly because I know what it is leading to. Sooner or later, one of them will get hold of a real gun and start playing cowboy and Indians with it. WE WERE

JUST PLAYING SOBS TOT WHO SHOT SISTER. Toy guns may be safe enough, but the habits children form with them can be deadly.

As for a real gun, parents should remember that it is not just another toy like a constructor set or a tin trumpet. An air gun can blind a man. A .22, the smallest of the powder-loaded guns, can kill him. To turn a child loose with a gun until safe habits have become second nature is like letting him drive a car without adequate instruction.

My own training with guns is fairly typical of that given by careful parents to my generation, and the method is still good. At an early age (four or five), I was given guns which fired peas, light balls, or rubber-tipped darts. (I cannot remember owning a gun that would not shoot something.) These guns had to be handled with the same care as a high-powered rifle. If I pointed one—much less fired it—at another person, the gun was taken from me for a week or so. At six I was given an air rifle, which I was allowed to shoot only under supervision, and at ten a .22 rifle, which I shot only under supervision for some time. At twelve, when I was given a shotgun, careful gun-handling had been pretty thoroughly drilled into me. By that time I was hunting mostly on my own, but I had no illusions about what would happen if I played the fool with a gun.

To expect that my contemporaries and I would never make mistakes with guns would be asking too much of human nature. I once made a dead-center shot on a light fixture with a supposedly empty pistol and had the gun sequestered for some months as a result. What was more important, I was horribly ashamed of myself. In my circle, accidents with guns were no funnier than congenital idiocy.

What saved us from more frequent and far worse accidents was ingrained good habits, particularly in gun-pointing, which had become conditioned reflexes and operated independently of conscious attention. Men carefully trained in gun-handling do not have to think about not firing to the flank, not stepping in front of another man's gun, or keeping their own guns pointed away from their companions. To violate any of these rules requires not only thought but an effort of will. For example, not long ago a salesman held up a target and invited me to "throw down"

on it to see how a gun handled. Even after I had broken the gun to make sure that it was empty, I was mildly uncomfortable. Reason assured me that it was safe to point the gun, but long habit kept nagging me.

Such a feeling may seem old-maidish to the trigger-happy types who, each hunting season, blithely fill the air with random lead. If they did not so frequently fill themselves and others with it too, I should have greater sympathy with their gay abandon.

BOMBARDIER TO THE PEOPLE OF AACHEN

By JACK LINDEMAN

In one loud stroke the ignorant monolithic age
Begot from history and your homes
A ruin of deliberate dust, a memory smashed by spite,
A human hand immobilized by death
Or death's constricting angel over head,
Higher than the sun or from the Son
A punishment for deeds, a passchendaele of blood,
For in one thousand years
The stones of Charlemagne grew soft
And fell like bombs of archaeology to dust.

FOR A WOMAN, MY AUNT

By E D S E L F O R D

My aunt in her forties walked on my grandfather's grave.
No Electra, she; still, it got to her.
The goodness of that woman was true to her all of her days.
She was not truer.

There were times when she might have married, but did not.
She labored with passion till the summer closed,
And nights she went alone to a secret spot:
For meditation, we supposed.

But then I learned, through sheerest happenstance,
That my aunt had six lovers—one each night
(And this left Sunday sacred). Wise child that I was,
I held her secret tight.

When she had lost them, one each and then all,
She went graceless down into the red clay Alabama stream;
And together we learned the frailty of the human word
And the absurdity of human dream.

College students and the nature of man

CLARKE A. CHAMBERS

In the years since the mushroom clouds over Hiroshima and Nagasaki marked the end of one great global war and the beginning of another struggle, it has been commonplace to speak of an Age of Anxiety, to warn of the crisis in Western Civilization, to exhort for this or that course of action lest we be overwhelmed by the perils which confront us. In a sense, of course, civilization has always been precarious. Other societies in other eras faced danger, decay, and destruction, and met the challenge, or learned to live with it, or went under. Because man is what he is, anxiety has ever been part of the human condition; because the world is what it is, the times have always seemed out of joint; because persistent change is the only consistent factor of life and thus is disturbing, men have often despaired of the present, idealized the past, and stood against the unfolding future. Men of other times have acted upon the premise that theirs was an Age of Crisis, but this does not make that designation a platitude in this era nor should its repetition be permitted to obscure the real perils which provoke our present anxiety.

The course of events and of ideas in the twentieth century has conspired, it would seem, to undermine many assumptions central to what is known as Western liberalism. Wars, depressions, inflation, social disintegration, and totalitarianism have taken their toll. Added to the terror of modern war, the coercions of the police state, and the confining pressures of a society increasingly urban and mechanized have been new concepts of man and society which tend to erode the traditional dignity and ultimate responsibility of the individual. The tendency of many theories of determinism in the social and psychological sciences was to constrict the area within which man's shrinking reason and atrophying will could operate. The implications of cultural relativism, in themselves potentially liberating forces, often became a source of moral nihilism rather than of personal autonomy.

Not only did the twentieth century confront America with

technological and military challenges but, and perhaps of greater importance, there were moral and ideological challenges as well. Americans generally had assumed the eternal verity of certain postulates. They had believed in the inevitability and irreversibility of progress, believed in the scientific method as the path to knowledge and to constructive social control, placed their faith in the intelligence and benevolence of man, and gloried in America's manifest destiny to make its experiment in democratic republicanism successful—perhaps to usher in the very kingdom of God on earth. The twentieth century gave evidence that these premises, these hopes, were not necessarily relevant to modern circumstances. Thus the present generation could no longer accept uncritically the dogma of earlier and happier generations which asserted that men, by taking thought and acting together in mutual trust and confidence, could direct their common destinies toward the elimination of ignorance and man's inhumanity toward man and could consciously build a new society in which brotherhood, liberty, and plenty would be the blessing and universal condition of mankind. As Abraham Lincoln had observed in an earlier crisis, "the dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present."

By mid-century many Americans had come to challenge, implicitly or explicitly, these assumptions of optimistic liberalism. As a graduate student in history during the postwar years, and more recently as an instructor of American history at several universities, I became interested in trying to interpret the attitudes of undergraduates toward these traditional suppositions concerning man, nature, and society. Recognizing the awkwardness of a questionnaire method, and accepting the impossibility of reaching definitive conclusions regarding the attitude of any group, however selected, toward such necessarily complex, nebulous, and ambiguous issues as these, I decided to use the highly subjective method of asking students registered in my courses to write anonymous, spontaneous essays in class on the following subjects: "What, to you, is the nature of man; that is, what do you conceive to be the nature of human nature?" and "What is your view of progress?" This was done early in the academic year in the hope that my own views as expressed in lecture and discussion would not prejudice the responses.

The essays were written in undergraduate, senior college history classes given by me at the University of Minnesota and at the Summer School of the University of Wisconsin, and in a European history course given by a colleague at Minnesota. After the essays had been written, the students were asked to list their sex, national origin, residence (farm, town, city), and religion, on the hunch that there might be some correlation between the views they would hold and these background factors. Actually, I found no clear correlation except in a few instances, as is later noted, to religion.

One hundred and seventy-two essays on the nature of human nature, and eighty-three essays on progress were turned in. The students were divided roughly fifty-five per cent males to forty-five per cent females. Fifty-eight per cent claimed Protestant affiliations of one denomination or another (the Lutheran and Methodist churches were clearly the leading Protestant faiths), seventeen per cent were Roman Catholics, eight per cent listed Jewish as their religious background, and the remaining seventeen per cent failed to state religious affiliations or experience, or noted that they were Christian Scientist (two students), Ethical Humanist (one), and agnostic (six). No student, to my knowledge, refused to cooperate in this classroom experiment, and in only one essay could I detect a suggestion of deliberately misleading and facetious remarks. This paper, which held that "The nature of Man is the *Sex Drive* and to be Aggressive and Selfish," and which was written by a male student identifying himself as a Hindu from Bombay, was discarded from consideration.

It should be added here as a prefatory note to the analysis and discussion which follows that I received generalized impressions rather than any data which could be analyzed statistically. Quite apparently also the essays reflected the age of the students as well as the Age in which they live. It was clear that the students were as much influenced by their academic environment as they were by the larger social environment in which they were immersed. I suspect also that few college generations have escaped some form of cynical rejection of the mores of their parents and teachers. The facts remain, moreover, that my sample is small, that there is no comparable evidence available for other or earlier student generations, and that there is no similar data from contemporary

non-student groups; and yet I feel that the responses I received had some significance relative to the suggestions made earlier in this paper. With these reservations in mind, let us look at the evidence.

Most of the essays expressed a very dim view of progress and an even dimmer view of human nature. It is true that a minority of not more than ten per cent of those who wrote on the concept of progress held to the view that history, especially in the American experience, indicated that man was steadily evolving a better and higher society, that the direction of change from old to new was also from poorer to better, and that real progress came only in free, liberal, democratic societies. However, many more students asserted the less traditional view that progress was not an irreversible process, that if the modern world had evidenced any substantial advance it was toward creating improved means for human destruction. As one student wrote, man "comes to the present with an undistinguished past" and moves into a "doubtful future." Others noted what seemed to them to be the degradation of intellectual, moral, and spiritual life, the disappearance of the ideals of Christian fellowship, and the omnipresence of fear, insecurity, and anxiety. Time and again individual students cited the great scientific and technological advances of recent generations only to conclude that although man may have learned to control nature he had not yet learned to control himself, and that in this failure lay the seeds of ultimate disaster.

A few students, taking an extreme relativistic position, denied that the concept of progress was a meaningful one; they asserted that to speak of progress implied a knowledge of good and evil, of better and worse, and these goals could never be objectively or conclusively defined. Typical of many responses was the following: "From walking to flying faster than sound; from a stone spark to electric units that give heat at a turn of a switch; from a candle to a million watt searchlight; from a one room shack to a Waldorf-Astoria; from 13 independent and uncooperative colonies to 48 states united in the common welfare; this, specifically, can be called examples of progress—and yet, what have we as humans done to make the world a better place to live in thru this progress? We have invented machines for the destruction of fellow humans, we have developed the H-bomb to exterminate us

all; we have given freedom to man's mind only to fill that mind again with psychological nonsense to make him worse than before; we have developed our scientific intelligence to the n-point, but we have forgotten that 'no man lives unto himself.' Progress shall be established when that day comes when one will say to another 'You are my Brother.'

When it came to writing an essay on human nature, most students, apparently embarrassed and stumped for a moment, began to scribble down descriptive adjectives and phrases before they attempted to analyze the question in more general terms. The adjectives that filled the papers were very revealing. Some of them might be considered as neutral; that is, without deliberate evaluative content; among these adjectives were the following: "confident," "conformist," "fascinating," "gregarious," "interesting," and "paradoxical." But neutral words such as these were few in number and were used infrequently. Other adjectives, with more favorable or positive overtones, were selected more often: "affectionate," "altruistic," "brave," "cooperative," "courteous," "dependable," "generous," "honest," "kind," "loyal," "rational," "sincere," etc. But most numerous of all were adjectives with negative connotations that were used over and over again: "aggressive," "arrogant," "bestial," "brutal," "corrupt," "crafty," "cruel," "debased," "depraved," "destructive," "dishonest," "greedy," "gullible," "hypocritical," "irrational," "lazy," "lustful," "money-mad," "narrow," "rotten," "selfish," "sex-driven," "spiteful," "vain," "warlike," and many others.

Analysis of the essays shows that a total of 22 different neutral adjectives were selected and that they were used, on a cumulative basis, 51 times in all. Sixty-eight different "positive" adjectives were used a total of 170 times; and 113 different "negative" adjectives were used 331 times. Descriptions of man as innately selfish were made 84 times; adjectives suggesting that man was unselfish or altruistic were chosen but 21 times. Man was described 22 times as warlike, belligerent, or violent, and only once as peaceful. Revealing as it is, such an analysis merely suggests some of the views these students held toward themselves and toward their fellows. A number of other considerations were implied or clearly expressed.

By far the most frequent description of man was one expressed

completely in biological, animalistic terms. In essay after essay came observations such as these: "Man is descended from a lower order of species; he is distinguished by his brain, opposable thumb, and rotating wrist." "Man is a mammal that partially controls his environment." "Man is an overdomesticated animal; with all the frills taken off man still acts on the survival of the fittest." "Man is an animal chiefly distinguished by an unshakable belief that he is something else." "Man is an animal, in no supernatural or in no metaphysical way is he different from any other animal." "To be 'good' is to survive." Man is a "sex-loving animal," "an educated beast." "Life is a struggle for power"; man strives for "control over his fellow humans." "*Homines sunt animalia*" constituted the entire essay of one student. Over one-third of all the students defined man exclusively or primarily in these terms, while one student, in addition, wrote that man "is made up of cells. Each cell is made up of 90% H₂O, fats, carbohydrates, and proteins in the state of emulsion . . . Thus from a bio-chemical standpoint man is just some protoplasm which is very egotistical in thinking itself the highest form of life."

If it seemed apparent that many students had been influenced in their view of man by courses in zoology or biology, it was also quite obvious that psychology and the social sciences had left their imprint as well. Some students described man as a highly complex nervous system that responded automatically and predictably to given stimuli. Many others reflected an exposure to Freudian hypotheses in their emphasis upon the subconscious "hungers and passions" that drive the human personality, and upon the multiple experiences of infancy and childhood which, it was often stated, determine the behavior of the adult person. The concept of man as a biological organism consciously seeking satisfaction of basic needs is seen, in one form, in the remarks of a student who concluded his essay: "It has been stated that man is easily satisfied by merely possessing food, shelter, and a woman to sleep with, but the case is not quite as simple as this. If he has food he wants better food, if he lives in a nice little house he wants a mansion, and if possible he would have a harem rather than just one wife."

As for the problem of human will and responsibility as opposed to a rigidly determining system of causality, there was little doubt as to which view came more naturally to more students: a few

took a middle common sense position that man made decisions not capriciously or arbitrarily but within the limits of the particular situation; but for every one student who claimed that man enjoyed ultimate liberty of decision to choose among alternatives, three dwelt on the severe, often absolute, limitations placed upon individual volition. Man, it was noted, was a "victim of his experiences, surroundings, and environment," his behavior was determined by "circumstances over which he has no control"—factors of birth, heredity, glandular secretions, infant traumae, biological drives, climate, geography, nationality, institutions (political, economic, social, cultural, religious), laws, folkways, mores, and taboos. It is interesting that the few students (eleven in all) who made a special effort to affirm the individual's capacity to make significant decisions argued from explicit religious premises, and that of these eleven all but one claimed church affiliations: five were Roman Catholic, three Lutheran, one Episcopalian, one Methodist, and one "Jewish agnostic." Typical of the arguments made by this latter group was the assertion that God had granted to man freedom of will to make moral decisions between good and evil and that, as a responsible soul, each person was strictly accountable for the consequences, both immediate and ultimate, of his behavior.

Considerably more students replied in the spirit of pragmatic relativism, just as so many had in their essays on progress, that if man's actions and beliefs were not absolutely determined by internal and external drives and forces, it was at least irrelevant to speak of "moral" decisions, for right and wrong, good and evil, were transient and fugitive standards. Given the limits within which individual choices can be made, the argument went, a person may select one course of action or another, but that one was clearly or objectively "better" or "worse" was impossible to judge. As one student nearly summarized this view: "Man's morality is purely relative to the society in which he lives."

Principles, values, standards of conduct, it was claimed, were man-made, determined by the kind of culture into which a person happened to be born, while some even asserted that the individual personality makes its own values to fit its own particular capacities and limitations. At least one student wrote a logically consistent essay in which he refused to direct his remarks toward

the subject, arguing that man had no nature other than relative to the society in which he existed. Noting the great variety of ways in which man had lived and worshiped, another student concluded: "The question, however, as to man being good or bad, depending on whether he kills or loves his fellow man, is not worth considering because in a particular situation or time an act by man may be good while at another time it may be bad—though it is the same act. Also since these laws are made by man, they can be broken by him without any goodness or badness connected with it." But still another student was not quite so sure; he wrote: "Man is the only animal that was given the power from God to tell the difference between right and wrong . . . but it must be admitted that the world that man has made for himself is so complex that it grows harder and harder to tell the difference between right and wrong." And still another, clinging to the outside chance that man enjoys free will, had few illusions that he would use his potential power of choice wisely: "Though he often knows good and right, he does not follow them because of his self-interest and ego-centricity. Few are thinking individuals—most are unthinking masses. Irrational—emotional—lacking foresight—somehow fascinated by destruction and often by his own."

Most significant of all, perhaps, was the fact that not more than ten or fifteen per cent of the students volunteered that man had a spiritual nature as well as a biological or psychological nature, or that there was any transcendent meaning or purpose in life. It may well be that if the same group of students had been asked point blank—"Does man have a soul?"—many of them would have answered in the affirmative; but that so many did not volunteer the existence of spiritual factors seems very revealing.

Those who did include a discussion of the spiritual nature of man rarely did so to the exclusion of other factors, and almost without exception they stated their views in catechismal terms, thus: "Man is composed of body and soul, endowed with reason and a free will, and made to the image and likeness of God. . . . The object of the intellect is truth, the object of the will is good." But for the three who stated explicitly that man was created "in the image of God," there were three others who claimed that man had created God in *his* image. Or: "Man was not created bad but because of the fall of man or rather original sin he cannot achieve

perfection unless he overcomes this evil or himself thru the help of grace. . . . His purpose on earth is to perfect himself spiritually so that he may ultimately go to heaven." Another, however, began his essay with the observation: "Man is an animal. . . ." This fragment was carefully crossed out and a new start was made: "Man is a being composed of body and soul and into the image and likeness of God." And then, in the next paragraph, the student returned to what seems to have been his original premise: "When you stop to think exactly what man is, it can really be a humorous situation if you study him from the physical point of view. After all he is a very silly animal."

Some students, without dwelling on spiritual concerns, observed merely that religion was "pragmatically good" because its effects could make men "less cruel" or because "without a belief in a Supreme Power or Being man loses his peculiar identity and becomes nothing more than another bit of matter in the universe." At least one student, on the other hand, noted that man was religious only "when convenient," and another wrote that men are "religious only when it is to their advantage to be so."

Although the theme of man's innate tendency to perpetrate evil, his inborn cussedness, at times his depravity ("truly rotten, through and through," wrote one) recurred frequently, this quality of human nature was much more often than not stated in matter-of-fact secular terms than in the familiar language of theological orthodoxy. Only a few held the view that "man is a human being placed here on this earth to suffer for the sins of our first parents, Adam and Eve," that his evil will had created "corruption, greed, illness, grief, war, and death," that his nature is stained by original sin, that his guilty soul can be saved only through God's grace and through the sacrificial intercession of Christ.

Of the few who stated man's sinful nature in religious terms five were Catholic (out of the twenty-six who listed Roman Catholicism as their religion), six were Lutheran (out of forty students of that faith in the group), one was a Baptist (the only student so identified), and one was a Christian Scientist (out of two such in the group), who elaborated on the "Adamic mist" that comes between man and God. Only twenty-seven students mentioned in any way that man possessed a spiritual side to his nature; of these, ten were Catholic, nine Lutheran, two Protestant

(denomination not listed), and one each were Baptist, Christian Scientist, Episcopalian, Methodist, and curiously, one student who claimed to be an agnostic but wrote: "Man is, I believe, created for the purpose of developing his immortal soul—of preparing that soul for an unending existence in some unrealized milieu beyond this existence." Three and a half times more students defined man's nature entirely in biological or animalistic terms than assigned to him a soul or implied even remote spiritual concerns.

It should perhaps be emphasized again that all this evidence is far from conclusive. The sample was small, it included only college students, and they were not selected according to testing standards but just happened to be registered in certain history courses in which, incidentally, there were students represented from nearly every major college in the University. It would be presumptuous to generalize to a larger group, such as the entire post-war generation let us say, from these essays, but I think that the views expressed tend to corroborate the general hypothesis that I have suggested: that traditional liberal views of man and progress which were still major forces in American life at the turn of the century have been undermined in the years since World War I and, at an accelerated pace, in the years since the man-made sun over Hiroshima brought the dawn of a new era.

If this is true, as I suspect it is, it would suggest a rather drastic and radical shift in attitudes on the part of the present generation, and would require a modification, at the least, of some of the traditional rationales of democratic thought and life. Although the resolution of the problems raised is quite beyond my intent and capacity and clearly beyond the limits of this paper, there are a few ideas that have occurred to me as I have studied these essays and talked with the students who wrote them.

To all appearances this generation of students is as prepossessing as any. They may be "silent," as *Time* magazine suggested, certainly they seem to be reluctant, perhaps with good reason, to make commitments, to carry the torch for any cause. Perhaps they have, unlike that lively and aggressive generation of depression students, been too much caught up in the search for reassuring answers and too little concerned with the asking of disquieting questions. But they are decent young men and women, serious,

hard working, and well meaning, if often confused and bewildered and inclined to passive conformity. If they are anxious and quiet, if they carry no banners, launch no crusades, perhaps this is more a sign of maturity than of resignation. We know at least that they have served in the armed forces of their country with courage and conviction; they have gone on to contribute to society in many constructive ways; they have married young, and borne children who are already adding to the flood which is engulfing the primary grades of our public schools—and a high birth rate can hardly be interpreted as a sign of defeatism, pessimism, or disintegration of faith.

But still the problem haunts us—the problem of the search for and the positing of values. Has this student generation become so attached to techniques that it is no longer concerned with the purposes for which these techniques may be employed? Has it been persuaded to concentrate so much effort on the search for causes and explanations that it has failed to contemplate the final mystery that has been called “will,” that ultimate repository of personal decision and of significant choice? Is there not danger that in overcoming an earlier and naïve voluntarism it has slipped into a too easy and excessive determinism? Might it be, even, that this generation of college students reflects the prevalent academic fad for the so-called “behavioral” and “statistical” studies which are interested only remotely and incidentally, if at all, with what man does with his environment or makes of himself? It may be that we have placed too high a premium on “adaptability” and “adjustment,” and too slight an emphasis on cultivating the resources of true individuality, on what some have called “personal autonomy,” or to use an old fashioned phrase, on “personal integrity.”

No slogan, no catch phrase, can ever adequately describe an age or a generation; history is too complex to be packaged into neat little bundles. This is no more “The Age of Anxiety” than the 1920’s were “The Jazz Age”; this is no more a “silent generation” than its parents constituted a “lost generation.” And yet there is some residual truth in each description. Certainly millions of thinking men are anxious. They have been forced to confront again the awful spectacle of man become depraved and vile; they know how human slavery, whether overt or subtle, shrivels man’s spirit; and always there persists the knowledge that man now, for

the first time in history, possesses the means of total self-extermination.

Yet I see no reason to despair, nor do I think that this generation has lapsed into despair. If these students think less well of themselves and their fellows than their parents' generation probably did, it may be that they will act more realistically because their vision is no longer distorted by the older illusions. If they are less dazzled by the prospect of eternal and inevitable progress they may be better prepared, therefore, to face the uncertainties and contingencies of the present. It is my observation, moreover, from talking with these students that as many of them sense the opportunity and welcome the challenge of the modern era as are disturbed and shaken by its troubles. I should suspect, however, that this has been characteristic of man ever since he began his eternally precarious venture of living in society and of working out cultures and civilizations. Each generation has been forced to make-do with what it had and try to go beyond what undoubtedly has appeared to be its own limitations; each person, similarly, has been moved to come to terms with his age and, more significantly, with himself. The university or college experience is a time of re-examination. If the student surrenders older clichés for the newer jargon and stereotypes of psychological-biological-sociological academese, this is entirely natural and proper.

We know that history cannot be repealed, that the past which lives in the present cannot be ignored, but we know, too, that society and the individual may transcend this historical totality. If the experience of the past generation has given cause for pessimism, a longer view may restore a bit of hope that civilization may, as before, somehow blunder along and muddle through even if the margin of permissible error has been narrowed. As for the individual, we know that renewal is as much a law of life as re-examination and denial. Some few, or many, of this generation may come to renew, on a different level and with a different understanding to be sure, the intrinsic faith of the civilization of which we are a part: the innate integrity and value of each human personality; the potential of man, as both creature and creator, for good and evil; his ultimate moral responsibility.

SOLILOQUY ON THE INSOLUBLE

By FLORENCE BECKER LENNON

Children of Lilith, we will not forget,
For the very tides of our blood remember.
The bricks of the house cleave faithfully one to another
The cellar does not spring from its foundations
The pounding in our ears is only the tide—
It will subside.

Cloud-mountains rush billowing over the moon's face
And the dry palmetto-leaves dance with a clacking sound.
In every crevice crickets and beetles remember;
The house-mice and the field-mice manage without a pitch-pipe
Owls and bats and coyotes need no rehearsal.
We too stand rooted and pulsing in the tide
But our green growth-tip has learned to say NO on occasion.
There where the NO sits may be a hideous bee-bump of injury
Or equally a perfect parthenogenetic blossom.
We have mastered ten thousand menacing tools
But the NO that croaked in the shadow of the cross has been the
undoing of—how many—gardeners.

To grow a flower from the NO requires a special soil
And—is it intrinsically superior to the Yea-flower?

Scotsman in buckskin

EDGELEY W. TODD

Time, an April evening, 1843. Sir William George Drummond Stewart, forty-eight, veteran of Waterloo, Sixth Baronet of Grandtully, Murthly, and Logie Almond, Scotland, and owner of the famous Birnam Wood, sits at the dinner table of the James Kennerly home (named Persimmon Hill) in St. Louis. Dinner is over, the ladies have withdrawn, and the gentlemen sip apple toddy and cherry bounce. Stewart is reminiscing, telling stories of his sporting adventures in the Rocky Mountains, where as a hunter in the thirties he has already spent six years with the Mountain Men during the heyday and decline of the fur trade of the Far West.

No one listens with keener interest than young William Clark Kennerly (named for his famous explorer-uncle, William Clark) and his young cousin Jefferson Clark, the explorer's son. What they hear stirs them with excitement, and they dare to hope that Stewart, now forming a new party with the long-experienced trapper and fur trader William Sublette as leader, will include them in the group.

Stewart is about ready to begin his last expedition to the Wind River Mountains. Here, even if he has to simulate the pageantry of the annual rendezvous (where carousing buckskinned trappers and Indians exchanged pelts, in time not long passed, for supplies the traders packed long miles overland), he hopes to recapture something of the old life with the earthy Mountain Men. Stewart knows that the rendezvous is no more. But he knows, too, that a few trappers are still in the mountains, stubbornly resisting the passing of the old days. It will be his last fling in the West, his last chance to hunt buffalo, to see Indians, to know the freedom of the high plains and mountains.

Exactly what young Bill Kennerly and Jeff Clark heard that spring night in St. Louis one hundred and thirteen years ago can never be known. Certainly, though, Stewart must have talked about his friend Jim Bridger, who once paraded among the trap-

pers in a suit of armor brought as a gift from Scotland, and from whose back Stewart had grimly watched Dr. Marcus Whitman remove a three-inch Blackfoot arrowhead just eight years before at the 1835 rendezvous on the Green. Stewart had the offending arrowhead as a memento. Or he might have told of the mulatto Jim Beckwourth, who had slyly let the Crows attack Stewart's camp up on the Tongue above the Big Horn Mountains while his friend Tom Fitzpatrick parleyed with their chiefs a few miles off. Or perhaps of the night during Stewart's first rendezvous in 1833 when the mad wolf ran amuck and fatally bit Stewart's mess mate, George Holmes. That was as regrettable as the time the Indian camp tender had made the mistake of stealing Stewart's horse, down near Taos, and Mark Head had brought back the Indian's scalp to claim the \$500 reward that Stewart in an exasperated moment had foolishly offered.

Mark Head, he probably emphasized, was a character, a real Mountain Man who stopped at nothing, not even fearing to attack a grizzly single-handed. No less a specimen was Joe Meek, who thought that had a rabid wolf bit him the concentrated alcohol in his veins might very likely cure the animal. Or for that matter Old Bill Williams, whom Stewart could easily remember feasting in his tent on buffalo hump ribs and choice imported liquors—Old Bill, the true eccentric and frontier booster, who could do anything a little more superlatively than any one else, whether it was killing Indians, spending money, drinking liquor, blaspheming, or shooting “higher and deeper, wider and closer, straighter and crookeder, and more rounding, and more every way, than ‘ever a son of a — of them all,’ ” so Stewart had heard David L. Brown say.

By way of contrast to these rough-hewn characters, Stewart might have recalled the day of laborious trekking with Nathaniel Wyeth, after the 1834 rendezvous, through the weird lava-strewn land between Bear Lake and the Snake River when they had come upon the “bald chief,” the suave Capt. Benjamin Bonneville, U.S.A. (made famous in 1837 by the grace of Washington Irving's pen), whose family had entertained Tom Paine in their Paris home and who had since been educated at West Point, and of how the three of them had meliorated the strain of travel in convivial but gentlemanly fellowship. Stewart could remember how they

had all sat Indian fashion in Bonneville's tent—the Bostonian Wyeth (not always so proper), the elegant French expatriate, and the aristocratic Scot himself, the three of them certainly a unique trio in that basalt wasteland—and had drunk Bonneville's mixture of diluted alcohol sweetened with honey down to the very bottom of the keg, Wyeth and Stewart paying no heed to a certain ghastliness growing on the face of their host as he politely urged his guests to enjoy themselves.

That would have finished one leg of his journey that summer, Stewart would recollect; and another would have been the few days spent on the Snake watching Wyeth build Fort Hall, before Stewart went on to the Columbia, where he had a sorry drenching at Celilo Falls, visited the Hudson Bay post Fort Vancouver, and traveled up into the Okanogan country before coming back to the next rendezvous on the Green.

There was much in similar vein that he could tell Bill Kennerly and Jeff Clark. He had more stories—about buffalo hunting, Indian scrapes, yarn-spinning with Black Harris, one of the best trapper raconteurs—than could possibly be told in one evening in even as comfortable surroundings as those of Persimmon Hill. All these things he had experienced, along with the unending freedom of land and sky and life itself that had beckoned him westward over green prairies and sagebrush plains, up river courses, and over the mountains to stand at last on the shore of the western sea. Stewart knew the West was changing. He had seen some of these changes when they first began and had watched the rendezvous dwindle down to nothing. He had seen the missionaries coming and the white-topped wagons. Before Time had gone too far, before it was too late, he would try to relive again for a few months the elemental realities that had once satisfied his virile nature in the excitement of the buffalo chase, the thrill of the grizzly encounter, and the gaudiness of wild, primitive life with Mountain Men and Indians at the rendezvous.

It was Sir William Drummond Stewart whom DeVoto made the central character in *Across the Wide Missouri* (1947), which brought Stewart and the fur trade of the thirties down to 1838. But about none of Sir William's excursions is so much known as about the one of 1843. He had publicity on a national scale. The

Time magazine of its day, *Niles' Register*, treated him as a celebrity, printing no less than thirteen items reporting his whereabouts. Matthew C. Field, correspondent for the *New Orleans Picayune*, who was along, sent back such dispatches as uncertain prairie communications permitted, and upon his return published a long series of picturesque sketches entitled "Prairie and Mountain Life" in the *Picayune*. William Clark Kennerly's reminiscences of the trip form part of an autobiography recently published by his daughter. The fragmentary journal of William Sublette is also available and adds a few details of the start of the trip not accessible elsewhere. Even an alleged portion of the excursion formed a colorful episode in a fictitious narrative entitled *The Backwoodsman*, translated from German by a fellow countryman of Stewart. These sources enable one to recreate Stewart's last expedition and to round out his unique career as a gentleman hunter among trappers.

Stewart with some of his men, including Jeff Clark as well as Kennerly, set out on May 22, 1843, from Westport, today part of Kansas City, but in the 1840's the chief jumping off point for the West from which Fremont, guided by Tom Fitzpatrick and Kit Carson, was this same spring starting his second western expedition, and from which three years later Francis Parkman would set out to study Indians on the tour made famous in his *Oregon Trail*. Stewart started five days ahead of Sublette because he wanted to skirt around a train of one hundred wagons bound for Oregon and California. (With these wagons, but unknown to Stewart, was his old friend Marcus Whitman returning to his mission at Waiilatpu after a hazardous winter trip to the East.) The new West was fast being born, but Stewart wanted no part of it.

He had ten carts and a small wagon drawn by mules. Sublette's group joined him on May 30, and the one-time friend of General Ashley and partner of Jedediah Smith took over the leadership of around sixty men. "There was Some 30 other Carts," Sublette wrote in his diary that day,

and small 2 horse wagons in Company Belonging to Individual gentlemen, Some of the army, Some professional Gentlemen, Come on the trip for pleasure, Some for Health, etc. etc. So we had doctors, Law-

yers, botanists, Bugg Ketchers, Hunters and men of nearly all professions, etc. etc. One half or more was hired men belonging to Sir William who he had employed on the trip.

It must have seemed a strange assortment to Sublette, more accustomed to commanding a caravan of trappers than being a professional guide for dudes on vacation.

Kennerly entered many of the names in his diary, a few from families long associated with the West, like Menard, Chouteau, Charboneau (son of Lewis and Clark's Shoshoni squaw guide, Sacagawea). In addition two Jesuit priests were going West as Indian missionaries. Antoine Clement (Stewart's half-breed guide and hunter in years past, whom he had taken to Scotland in 1838 to wait on table but chiefly to talk about the old days in Stewart's den, with its stuffed buffalo heads, bear skin rugs, Indian bows, lances, shields, and war bonnets) was down as a hunter again, a role more fitting than that of liveried servant in a Scottish castle. Seven others were along to perform servants' duties. Stewart was traveling on a lavish scale, as usual. Yet from his point of view he was being economical. It was cheaper to be here than in Scotland, although he was still obliged to pay a tax on each window in baronial Murthly Castle. On the prairie a tent served as castle.

By June 6 they were a couple of days from buffalo country. Supplies were running low, and they were hoping for fresh game. The prairie rivers, whose difficult spring crossings forced them to construct rafts for the wagons, slowed them down. Still, the trip was adventurous, for by now they were in Indian country. Already they had met an Osage and Otoe war party carrying long poles from which dangled the scalps of slain Pawnees. Indians tried to steal their horses at night. Three Pawnees took refuge with Stewart. And there were rumors that two hundred Sioux were on the warpath against the main Pawnee tribe and that two thousand were to attack the Snakes and Crows.

Finally, twenty-seven days from Westport, they came to the buffalo, and Stewart could gratify the lust to kill for which he had come thousands of miles. It was on a Sunday, and one of the missionary priests said Mass that morning. The Creoles, Matthew Field, and probably Stewart (he had been baptized a Catholic in St. Louis years before) attended. In the mind of Creole trapper Joe Pourier one thought was uppermost—buffalo.

"It was a quaint and curious spectacle," Field wrote later for the *Picayune*,

to see the old hunter and mountaineer piously passing the bead rosary through his fingers, and with his eyes wandering around the prairie, praying aloud in broken English to see buffalo!

"Forgive us some sin, *O mon Dieu*—let us see some fat cow this today—we have not no bacon more—and even old bull was better than no meat at all—thank Heaven for all everything—Amen!"

Joe's prayer was efficacious and by ten o'clock had been granted. Antoine Clement hurried in to report five bulls grazing, and at once more than a dozen hunters were in their saddles. Thereafter, buffalo appeared in great numbers to relieve the tedium of dusty travel, and the men could now replenish their supplies. Buffalo were so plentiful that Kennerly estimated a million. There was danger from a herd of such size, and the men were hard pressed by shooting and building fires at night to keep from being pushed into the Platte. Even moving rapidly, the herd required two days to pass.

Following the Platte through buffalo country, they came in time to the north fork and went up this to Fort Laramie. Here Stewart found thirty Sioux lodges. He was knowing by now in the ways of the plains and mountains, and called the warriors together for a feast. The day was cold and wet. Rain beat upon the lodge skins. Two kettles were brought into the center of Stewart's lodge, one containing steaming buffalo stew, the other hot coffee. The ritual pipe was smoked before the feast, and Stewart made a speech:

"My sons—I call you together to feast you and give you presents. All I want from you in return is your promise to treat white men well when you meet them. Your white brothers come here to trade with you, to bring you beads, blankets, vermilion, powder and lead. You should not rob or murder them. It is wrong. When you meet one or two white men on the prairie or among the big rocks, hunting buffalo, or trapping beaver, do not take them by the hair, but take them by the hand. So you will be good Indians, and your white brothers will love you."

Everyone's heart was good. The warriors ate with relish and called to their squaws eating and standing around outside in the wet. The feast ended with another ritual of pipe smoking.

Not far down the river was a Sioux burying ground that Stewart had passed just the day before. Here the dead bodies were bound in skins and placed upon rude scaffolds, some so delapidated now that skeletons protruded. Bleached bones and skulls desecrated by a Crow war party lay scattered over the ground. Graves of whites had been unearthed, but not that of Milton Sublette, buried there seven years before. "A rude pine cross, prostrate and broken," Matthew Field wrote,

was all the memorial over the brave man's bones; but two of his brothers [William and Solomon] were with us, and one of them remained here while we moved onward in among the mountains.—When we returned we found a monument, built somewhat in Christian fashion, marking the spot. Solomon Sublette during our absence had paid this fraternal attention to the remains of poor Milton.

The day following Stewart's feast and expression of friendship, he nearly had serious trouble when eight other Sioux rode in at breakneck speed. They had understood that the "white chief" and his friends would also come to their camp fifteen miles away for a grand feast. Their squaws had been busy cooking dog meat (a prized delicacy), and buffalo robes had been thickly spread on the floors of their lodges. The eight Sioux, really important men in their nation, were angry at Stewart for failing to appear, ill-humored by the rumor that he had been giving presents to a lesser band than theirs. They threatened. They would drive off his horses. And they might have, had Stewart not known how to put up a bold front and convince them of his good will and friendship.

The eight warriors had fanciful names: Wahkee Atchicala (Little Thunder), O-kee-ka-cha (Man that Shades the Sun), Schou-kee-snah (Solitary Dog), Tia-kia (Flying Bird), Ta-Tunka-Scah (White Bull), Wah-ke (Grey Eyes), Ni-to-kee (untranslatable), and another unrecorded. They remained for the night, and the next morning Stewart treated them with a novel experience. He had brought with him a contrivance that could produce an electric shock. "This was about the newest 'medicine' that the Sioux had heard of," wrote Field.

Bottled lightning!—"The man that shades the sun" turned pale when he heard of it! A few of us stood around and received a shock before the Indians, that they might gain something of an understanding of

the affair and witness what effect would be produced. But though they manifested great wonder at the clicking of the sparks and at our simultaneous start, it was evident that no true intelligence had glimmered upon their comprehension in regard to what it all meant. They, however, readily arranged themselves as we directed, and we set the Medicine Machine in operation upon them. Nothing could have been more comical than the effect produced when the shock took place. The Solitary Dog thought the White Bull struck him, and at once commenced pummelling back in furious fashion. For a moment the thing looked as if we had kicked up a desperate row among the Brulés. They shouted and jumped and tossed their arms in the air. . . . What surprised them most was the fact of the shock startling them all at once, with such instantaneous rapidity, while their unsophisticated notion was that if the bottled lightning had to get through one man on its road to strike another, the man struck first ought to feel first. They expressed this to us, at the same time acknowledging that the dose of lightning we gave them was "great medicine."

In the end Stewart's practical joke upon the Brulé Sioux produced no dire result, his conduct on this and the previous two days revealing something of his mastery of Indian psychology gained in the course of six previous years in the Indian country.

But now Stewart had to push on. His destination was the old rendezvous grounds on the Green River, and the lakes along the western base of the Wind River Mountains. On July 8 the caravan was still in eastern Wyoming on the North Platte. Four days before they had had a "magnificent jollification" to honor the national holiday. There had been roast beef and plum pudding, Field reported, as well as ". . . Rhine wine (three dozen), milk punch, *Minny Warka* (à la Sioux), corn dodgers (à la hunter), all the choice parts of the buffalo, cooked in the best known style, and everything really and truly superb." They had saluted the flag with three volleys fired from thirty rifles, celebrated the Mass, and been feasted by Sir William. The caravan, with no serious business to attend to and no definite purpose in mind but to have a good time, was truly on a vacation jaunt. But that Stewart in a spirit of high jinks made a side excursion into Colorado's Middle Park does not appear in the factual record.

It does appear in what must be assumed to be fictional guise in Sir Frederick C. L. Wraxall's translation *The Backwoodsman, or Life on the Indian Frontier*. It contains an elaborate description

of the carefree individuals comprising Stewart's party in something more than truthful form but still catching the actual spirit that motivated them. "This small army," part of the passage in *The Backwoodsman* reads,

offered the most curious sight I ever beheld. All sorts of dresses, from the lightly-clad savage to the most elegant gentleman were before us. Many young swells from the Eastern luxurious cities of this continent, as well as from those of the Old World, educated in ballrooms, operas, and concert rooms, had followed their fancy in the selection of their costumes, and appeared in mediaeval garb, with broad-brimmed plumed hats, jerkins with split sleeves, leathern breeches, tall Napoleon boots with enormous spurs, large gauntlets, and had put on the swords of their forefathers; others had preferred the old Spanish costume, and donned loose velvet blue or green paletots, while the hat of an Italian brigand chief, with its red-cock's feather, covered their long perfumed locks, and a broad white shirt-collar was turned down over their shoulders. The open sleeves displayed the fine linen of their shirts; wide trousers were forced into long red morocco boots, on which large wheeled spurs rattled, and a brace of handsomely inlaid pistols and a long dagger ornamented their belt. Others, again, had read Cooper, and chosen his heroes as their model; they were dressed in leather from head to foot, with a broad-brimmed gray hat, a long heavy hunting-knife, at their side, and leaning on an enormous rifle. They seemed to envy my shabby clothes, all stiff with blood, while their dress, which had only just left the tailor's hands, had not a spot on it. Others, again, had remained faithful to the appearance of the gentleman of the Broadway, New York, had put on a broad-brimmed hat instead of the "chimney-pot" of civilization, and went about the camp in comfortable slippers, smoking fine Havannah cigars. Only one fashion had gained the victory over the national and fancy costumes here represented, this was the beard, which had not been troubled by a razor for a long time.

We soon formed acquaintances among this medley of characters, and led a life than which a better could not be found at the Palais Royal. The most delicate wines graced our table, which was covered by artistic cooks with the daintiest dishes; we smoked the best cigars and drank the finest mocha [coffee]. All these things so precious to us were rendered agreeable by the cheerful humour that prevailed all through the camp, and was displayed in every conversation. We spent the time in firing at a mark, in riding races, in various sports in which agility was displayed, in card-playing and in dicing, in hunting, which sport, however, only appeared popular with a portion, while the rest amused themselves nearer camp. . . . I remained with my comrade four days. . . . When we at last led our horses out of camp, S_____

accompanied us by a salvo of rifle shots. The gentlemen rode several miles with us, and then returned to their friends. . . .

This musical-comedy scene, with its costumed characters and epicurean delicacies, its idle pastimes and holiday air, accords well with the prodigality of Stewart's tours and the gay diversions of his party when they reached their destination.

Stewart wanted, once he had reached the Green River country, to bring together an assemblage of Mountain Men and Indians to create something at least resembling a former rendezvous. Accordingly, toward the end of July he sent a three-man express to Fort Bridger, some two hundred miles ahead on Black's Fork of the Green. Their object was to invite Bridger, any other Mountain Men loitering at the fort, and whatever Indians might be camped nearby to Sir William's encampment near the Green. Bridger had established his fort as a service to emigrants a month or so before (the first constructed for this purpose on the Oregon-California trail), and although Stewart's main party did not visit it, his express was among the earliest of Bridger's white patrons. The fort was still unfinished, a single row of rough, log structures forming one side of what would eventually be a quadrangle. The Snakes had pitched forty or so tepees about a half mile downstream, and between these and the fort stood skin lodges of white hunters and trappers.

The three-man express reached the fort after four or five days. At that they were lucky. At noon the second day they had a near brush with forty belligerent Shoshonis; but three rifles in the hands of as many trappers, who combined determination with liberal gifts of vermilion and other presents, softened their mood. The trappers passed on and delivered their invitation to the fort. Just as a group was about to set out to join Stewart, seventy or eighty Cheyennes made a sudden raid on the band of horses, belonging to the whites and the Snake village, and drove off nearly three hundred. All but forty were shortly retaken (Miles Good-year, a young trapper at the fort, the first in pursuit), but among these forty were the three belonging to Stewart's men.

Stewart in the meantime was moving forward along the Sweet-water and over South Pass to Green River. He ascended it and one of its eastern tributaries to an unidentified lake lying at the

western base of the Wind River Range within a short distance of present-day Pinedale, Wyoming. To this place he had come with painter Alfred Jacob Miller six years before so that he might carry pictorial reminders of its blue magnificence home to Scotland. Now he was in the lakes area again, perhaps on Fremont Lake, as it is called today. If this location is correct, he camped at its western end alongside the clear stream forming its outlet. In lake and stream were fine trout that provided sport for nearly everyone.

The men were amusing themselves in this fashion one day when they heard the order to run for their lives and get their rifles. Indian screaming and hooting sounded in the distance, and soon thirty or more horses bearing the Indians and trappers from Fort Bridger, as well as the three men whom Stewart had sent there, rode frantically into camp in the dashing style that Stewart had often seen in the heyday of the rendezvous.

Matthew Field left the only written account of the events of the next two weeks. These comprised a make-believe rendezvous. Both the Snakes and the trappers set up their lodges near Stewart's. "A busy trading time commenced," wrote Field,

and after getting our skins from the trappers, we set the Sho-sho-nee [Snake] girls to work tailoring up mountain dresses for us. Some of them were famous costumers, but the principal *modiste* and fashionable lady of the crowd was Madam Jack Robinson, the intelligent lady of one of the trappers. Her lodge we called the St. Charles Hotel, as it was the popular resort in camp, and in it we always found the best entertainment. Jack himself was a noble fellow. . . . Madam Jack was quite a leader of Snake fashions. The trappings upon her horse did not cost less than three hundred dollars, and the amount of beads and bells that hung about the saddle, bridle and crupper, was really dazzling to behold. The greatest lady we saw in the Indian country was Madam Jack Robinson.

When the men weren't buying her goods, they amused themselves with other attractions, chief of which were horse racing and betting. Field described the three days of racing in what he called "the usual style of the chroniclers of the Turf." Members of Stewart's party, Indians, and trappers all participated in an effort to capture the purse, a potpourri of Indian trinkets, two mules, twelve bottles of champagne, another of white Rhine wine, a half dozen leather shirts, and a brace of pistols, the whole assortment

worth about five hundred dollars. Stewart entered a spotted bay heretofore reserved for buffalo hunting, but it lost to Robinson's horse, named Siskeedee (prairie hen), ridden by one of the Indians.

The motley gathering provided Field with a chance to describe the trappers whom he met at the camp. Besides being the fullest literary account of Stewart's 1843 expedition, his articles show that he recognized in the Mountain Men what many other writers have since discovered—the raw material of literature. "Our vast Western wilderness," he wrote in the *Picayune*, ". . . is full of all the materials that go to make up the liveliest and most curious enchantments of song and story. The wars of the wild tribes, the adventures of the lonely trappers, legends of other days, and mountain yarns about the present, all these have in them an attractive interest that must be felt alike in city or country." Commenting upon the Mountain Men in particular, he continued:

. . . the camp was visited by a number of genuine, demi-barbarised [*sic*] men of the mountains. Several superb samples of the trapper tribe came to bid the travellers from the States welcome, and for many days full opportunity was afforded for marking the manners and customs of a class of men who wander from even the hearing of civilization, to roam with the red children of the land, and rob the grisly [*sic*] bear of his resting place.—Among these were some of the wildest and most original characters that were ever modelled by strong will and strange circumstance.

Prominent among these trappers who fascinated Field was Black Harris, for whom a fellow trapper (James Clyman) had once composed the epitaph:

Here lies the bones of old Black Harris
who often traveled beyond the far west
and for the freedom of Equal rights
He crossed the snowy mountain hights
was free and easy kind of soul
Especially with a Belly full.

Among other things his ingenuity as a spinner of yarns in the true tradition of the frontier tall tale had helped spread his reputation far and wide in the mountains.

Harris's famous story of the "putrefied forest," one of the best in the repertoire of the Mountain Man, has been preserved in numerous places, the classic version being that told by Stewart's countryman George F. Ruxton in *Life in the Far West*, by all odds the finest literary portrayal of the trapper era. As Black Harris told this yarn, he and Rube Herring and William Sublette were caught in the Black Hills (today's Laramie Mountains) in fifty feet of snow. Their food running out, they were forced to live off their moccasins for six weeks, "poor doin's," indeed. But one day they crossed a divide and found a "periara" where the grass was green and the trees were in leaf and the birds were singing—all in February. It looked like summer. Even the horses brightened. But the first bird shot for food plummeted from the tree in two pieces, the head still singing; "and when I takes up the meat," Harris would say, "I finds it stone, wagh!" Their axe broke when they tried to chop into a cottonwood. The grass in the horses' mouths was stone, too. It broke in the hand like pipe stems, and leaves snapped like Californy sea shells. Harris and his friends concluded that it was all "putrefactions." But when asked if the place smelled bad, his ready answer was to demand whether a skunk would stink if it was froze to stone.

That was the way Ruxton learned the story later in the forties. But now Field heard it too, adorned with Harris' "surprising touches of imagination. He deposes and says, that *birds* are there, sitting on the branches, the most hard-hearted things of all the feathered tribe, being solidified into stone, for all time to come!" But this wasn't all that he heard of "putrefactions."

Another mountaineer [Bridger?] will fight any man who won't believe, that he once sharpened his knife upon the tail of an eagle, that was turned into stone while in the very act of whetting its own bill upon another rock. The man who tells this hard story, further declares, that he once carried a stone *sapling* of pine, five hundred miles on his shoulder, while travelling home on foot; but, being overtaken by winter, he dropped the tree, knocked off and carried along the birds, and arrived at *Independence*, literally, with an important part of his personal apparel overflowing with rocks!

It wasn't only Black Harris who excited Field's curiosity. There were also Mark Head, who had earned the bounty for the Indian's scalp; Joe Pourier, also noted above, another raconteur who told

stories with "graphic vigor" in broken English; William Sublette himself, Stewart's guide and a long-time Mountain Man, who told of a perilous winter trek across snow-covered plains with Black Harris in 1827; and even Old Bill Williams, who hadn't yet earned his bad, but undeserved, reputation for Fremont's disaster in the San Juan Mountains in the winter of 1848-49.

The unmatched originality of Old Bill struck Field forcibly. Williams was without doubt unique. Everyone who ever tried to capture his singularity in writing conveys this much. To Field he was a "whimsical old genius" and "the prince of queer ones." "He calls himself *William S. Williams, M.T.*," Field went on to say,

and he is most resolutely determined upon having the title initials ("M.T.") always affixed to his name. He is the oldest man in the mountains [he wasn't, but gave people that impression], having resolved to live and die there, and more droll anecdotes are told about him than would fill a pair of volumes of modern size. *M.T.* is meant to signify *Master Trapper*, and the old man has just seized upon the whim of insisting that this distinguishing mark shall on all occasions and under all circumstances be attached to his name.

Field's style of writing ran naturally to the humorous, and in Bill Williams' inclination to exaggerate in approved mountain style he found a ready subject. Williams was, in fact, as were Black Harris and also Jim Bridger, representative of the spirit of exaggerated frontier humor, and the incongruity within the following brief anecdote is a case in point. "He chanced at one time," Field wrote,

to fall into a mortal quarrel with a Blackfoot Indian, and upon achieving advantage, he at once seized upon the red fellow's scalplock.

"Bill Williams!" shouted the Indian, whose whole knowledge in English consisted in the capacity of pronouncing this singular old white man's name.

"William S. Williams, M.T., if you please," said the old man of the mountains, as he coolly darted the point of his knife around the scalplock and tore it off.

After a fortnight of mingling with such picturesque characters, of fishing, hunting, rambling around the lake, horse racing, and

betting with the Indians, Stewart's party set out once more. Kennerly's reminiscences are the only source showing that they went north, probably through Jackson Hole, into what is now Yellowstone Park. They entered one of the geyser areas, possibly the Heart Lake Basin, but how long they remained in the Yellowstone region Kennerly does not reveal. Stewart had quite likely visited it in previous years with Bridger or Fitzpatrick, as knowledge of its terrain in one of his novels suggests. But on the whole little is recorded of their exact doings there.

They left on August 17, heading back toward South Pass, the Sweetwater, Devil's Gate and Independence Rock, and the North Platte. By the end of the first week in September they appear to have again reached Fort Laramie. But their progress was slow. By the 28th of September they had not progressed beyond the forks of the Platte, where they laid up for a few days because of rain and the need to lay in a supply of meat. Some of the party were becoming impatient with Stewart's slow pace and were eager to get on to St. Louis. A split took place, and twenty-one started out ahead of the main group, Clark Kennerly among them. Field remained with Stewart, and if his opinion is indicative of the general temper of those who stayed, their spirits were in fine order. "We are the fattest, greasiest set of truant rogues your liveliest imagination can call up to view," he wrote to the *Picayune* in a letter carried by the advance party. "We are the merriest, raggedest—perhaps you would add, the ugliest—set of buffalo butchers that ever cracked a rifle among the big hills of Wind River."

Stewart's lack of eagerness to hurry back to St. Louis is readily understandable. He was seeking reasons for remaining in the West as long as possible. He knew that he would not come again, and the magic grip in which the mountains held him was not easily broken. He sought to delay by paying a final visit to the Pawnees in their "grand village."

In retrospect at this point Field reviewed for the *Picayune* the course of their summer's rambles. "I can only tell you now," he wrote,

that we have made the most of our time during this half-year's excursions; we have pierced the Western wilderness, beyond your log-houses of the "Far West," some ten or twelve hundred miles, where we have wandered about a fortnight or so among the fastnesses of the great

Wind river chain of gigantic rocks; we have crossed the dividing ridge that forms the huge boundary wall from the declivities of which start the leaping waters of the Atlantic and the Pacific; and we have briefly seen something of Shawnees, Pawnees, Delawares, Osages, Otoes, Sioux, Chayennes and Snakes. We are now thus far homeward, safe and well, having but one truly serious and fatal mishap to record. One of our number we have left sleeping his last beneath the "Red Buttes"—the innocent victim of a frightful casualty. He was a youth of fifteen, named François Clemint [*sic*]. . . .

Of course, we have had a fair share of upsets, break-downs, involuntary leaps from flying steeds, &c., but nothing else that we may not all laugh at when we get home. We have had a little brush with the rascally Chayennes [at Fort Bridger] that we may tell of, which left some scalps flying on long poles, but our own damage amounted only to the loss of three animals.—On another occasion we lost two, a mare and a mule, stolen by some skulking Sioux, who dogged us for days [on the way out], and at length sneaked upon us in the night.

All told, with the exception of François Clement's death, it had been a good trip, not equal in Stewart's judgment, perhaps to those of former years, but still a summer of good hunting and sport with reasonable approximation to the old life among the Mountain Men.

François's death was the one dark spot in the picture. It had taken place on the eastward bound stage of the journey when the party halted at midday on the North Platte to exchange greetings with Jim Bridger's friend and partner, Louis Vasquez, an old Mountain Man whom Stewart, Sublette, and others there knew well. François accidentally shot himself while drawing a rifle out from under a tent. He was a favorite with Stewart, who now held him paternally in his arms while blood pulsed from the hole in his left breast. It was a mortal shot, and Doctor Tilghman, a member of the party, could do nothing.

François, certain of death, lamented (in words that Field recorded), "Mon Dieu! je suis mort! je suis mort!—O! mon Dieu." And he piteously called to his mother, "Oh, ma mère, ma chère mère! je meurs! je meurs! je ne te verrai jamais encore!"

By his side knelt his brother, Antoine, stoically concealing his emotions as taught by Indian heritage and training as a Mountain Man. Field left a solemn picture of Antoine cast in the role of mourner:

The fine form of the sturdy, sun-burned mountaineer seemed like a figure hardened into bronze, as he knelt, speechless and immovable, beside his dying brother during the gloomy hours of that evening. He kissed the boy repeatedly, but never wept or uttered a syllable. He sat with the corpse, and never spoke. When the camp moved away from the grave, next day, there we left Antoine, all alone, and there he stood, his figure growing indistinct in distance, until all sight of him was gone; and never, during all the rest of our travels [homeward], did Antoine mention his brother, until, when on the steamboat, nearing his home, with a choking voice and eyes filling up with tears, he asked the writer of this to give him on paper the dying words of François.

Back in St. Louis by mid-October, Stewart disbanded his party and had a last dinner at Persimmon Hill, where seven months before he had outlined his summer excursion. What he did during the fall and winter, aside from remaining in America, does not appear in the record. In May of the following spring, 1844, he was in New York preparing to leave for the last time the land of the Mountain Men and the wild Indians. Once in Scotland he would attempt to relive his life in the wilderness by recreating in fictional form the scenes that he had known in the Far West.

A NOTE ON SOURCES

In place of the excessive number of footnotes required to document all the facts in the above article, the following acknowledgement of sources is substituted. The author's chief indebtedness is to Matthew C. Field's "Prairie and Mountain Life," published in the *New Orleans Picayune* between Nov. 14, 1843, and March 9, 1844, supplemented by his dispatches to the *Picayune*, June 7 to Nov. 9, 1843. William Clark Kennerly's reminiscences have been published as *Persimmon Hill, a Narrative of Old St. Louis and the Far West* (Norman, 1948). Sublette's diary appears in "A Fragmentary Journal of William L. Sublette," ed. Harrison C. Dale, *Miss. Valley Hist. Rev.*, VI (1919), 99-110; and David L. Brown's *Three Years in the Rocky Mountains*, first published in the *Cincinnati Daily and Weekly Atlas*, Sept., 1845, has been reissued by Edw. Eberstadt & Sons (New York, 1950). The drinking bout with Bonneville is in John K. Townsend's *Narrative of a Journey Across the Rocky Mountains* (Phila., 1839), reprinted in R. G. Thwaites, ed., *Early Western Travels* (Cleveland, 1905), vol. XXI. *The Backwoodsman* was written originally by Friedr. Armand Strubberg as *Amerikanische Jagd-und Reisen-abenteuer aus meinen Leben in den westlichen Indianergebieten* (Stuttgart und Augsburg, 1858). Clyman's epitaph for Black Harris is from *James Clyman, American Frontiersman*, ed. Charles L. Camp (San Francisco, 1928).

and the "putrefied forest" story from Ruxton's *Life in the Far West*, first published in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, LXIII-LXIV (1848) and recently reissued by the University of Oklahoma Press (Norman, 1951), ed. LeRoy R. Hafen. A few details are taken from Bernard DeVoto's *Across the Wide Missouri* (Boston, 1947), from the *Complete Peerage* (Exeter, 1905), and from Stewart's second novel, *Edward Warren* (London, 1854).

(Continued from page 228)

TOM BURNAM ("Three Poems," p. 295), Associate Professor of English at Colorado State College of Education, is President of the Rocky Mountain American Studies Association. His articles, poems, and short stories have been published in *College English*, *Empire Magazine*, *English Journal*, *Western Humanities Review*, *Arizona Quarterly*, *Pacific Spectator*, *Saturday Review of Literature*, *American Quarterly*, and *Modern Language Notes*.

J. D. A. OGILVY ("Gun Manners," p. 297), Associate Professor of English at the University of Colorado, is the son of the famous Colorado pioneer Lord Ogilvy. His articles about the early West have been featured twice before in *The Colorado Quarterly*—Autumn (1952) and Summer (1953).

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CLARKE A. CHAMBERS ("College Students and the Nature of Man," p. 306), Assistant Professor of History at the University of Minnesota, received his B.A. degree from Carleton College and his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of California at Berkeley. He taught at the University of California for a year before going to the University of Minnesota in 1951.

FLORENCE BECKER LENNON ("Soliloquy on the Insoluble," poem, p. 318), of Boulder, Colorado, has published poetry and prose in newspapers, magazines, and anthologies. The Winter (1953) and Autumn (1953) issues of *The Colorado Quarterly* each contained a poem of hers.

EDGELEY W. TODD ("Scotsman in Buckskin," p. 319), Associate Professor of English and Modern Language at Colorado A. and M. College, received his Ph.D. from Northwestern University. His articles have appeared in *Western Humanities Review*, *New England Quarterly*, *Huntington Library Quarterly*, and the Summer (1953) *Colorado Quarterly*.

